WHILE 'TIS MAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A DESPERATE CHARACTER," &c.

CHAPTER IV.

I HAVE seen a good many pretty girls in my time; but even at the risk of mortally offending some of them, I cannot help saying that she whom the old lady addressed by the name of Jessie—the only intelligible word she could speak, by the way—as I, then, for the first time beheld her, seemed to me the very fairest of them all; and I am of the same opinion still.

Mentally I judged her to be sixteen; but subsequently discovered that she was two years older.

Pale and delicate though she looked—half-starved, in fact—there was no mistaking her refined and intellectual features for those of an ordinary inhabitant of the Rents; nor was her eastern origin in any way doubtful, notwithstanding her large blue eyes, and the profusion of fair wavy hair that floated round her shoulders and rippled more than half-way down her back. She was undoubtedly a Jewess; and yet the old lady, who, by the way, could scarcely be her mother, presented certainly in her wizened features no trace of any such honourable descent, her Hebrew name of Mrs. Josephs notwithstanding.

Then I recollected that my child-guide had spoken of "the sick lady's granddaughter;" doubtless it was on the father's side that this fair maiden claimed kindred with the aristocracy of human nature; but I was wrong, as I not unusually am when I attempt a guess.

Yes, she was a beautiful girl; and yet it would have been difficult to say wherein her chiefest attraction lay, in features, form, or flowing locks—rather in all combined; but I must not attempt her portrait, not here at least, where she necessarily appears under a cloud in the murky atmosphere of Rhymer's Rents.

"I am so glad you have come, doctor!" she exclaimed, in the flute-like tone that had already won my goodwill for the unseen speaker. "Poor gran'ma was taken very ill in the night, so ill that I dared not leave her; but towards morning she seemed to rally a little, and I ran round to your house to ask you to come and see her. I hope you will pardon the liberty I have taken, but I pass

your door every morning and evening, and have so often read your name on the brass-plate, that it has become quite familiar to me, and you seem quite like an old acquaintance. I have just been round to your house again, for I thought you had not received the message, as it is getting late, and you had not come."

"I cannot see every one 'first,'" I replied, with a smile; "but now I am here, I will do everything I possibly can for the poor old lady, who is very, very ill, and I fear has been irritated by my not being able to understand what she wanted to say to me."

"Gran' *is* irritable," admitted the girl, in a lower tone; "but you must not mind her; she is a good old gran,' too;" here she kissed the wizened face of the old woman, and smoothed her faded curls and dilapidated cap—"a good old gran.'"

The sick woman seemed to take the caress impatiently, and tried her utmost to say something which neither her granddaughter nor I could understand; her inability to express herself intelligibly seemed to cause her the greatest annoyance, and irritated her to such an extent that I feared a recurrence of her attack, which would, in all probability, have proved immediately fatal.

"I think," I said, addressing myself to the granddaughter, "that I had better go; my presence here only vexes her—you must keep her as quiet as you can; I will make her up some suitable medicine, which I hope will be of use."

"Oh, thank you, doctor; thank you so very much. She is the only friend I have in the world; and, if I was to lose her, I don't know what would become of me."

"Have you lived here long?" I inquired, with an unusual feeling of interest in my new acquaintances.

"Almost twelve months," replied the girl, with a deep sigh, that seemed to swell up from the very depth of her heart—"but we have been very unfortunate. Little by little everything we had of any value has gone."

"May I ask," I continued, "how you get your living?"

Jessie flushed, to the tips of her ears, a vivid scarlet, and was on the point of resenting an inquiry which had been, certainly, most clumsily, not to say offensively, put; though not from any feeling of idle curiosity, but from deep and genuine interest, as I immediately hastened to explain.

"I give lessons in music and singing in a school," she replied, "for which I receive seven-and-sixpence a week, and gran' used to do a great deal of sewing—she is a very beautiful worker—and so we have managed to exist, after a fashion. Unfortunately, however, we have fallen into arrears with our landlord, a dreadful

man—" then, with hesitation—"but perhaps you know him, Mr. Browne?"

I shook my head, and she continued:

"He threatens all manner of horrible proceedings, and has terrified us both so much, that I am almost afraid to go out of the house, and I am sure poor gran's attack was brought on through fear of him."

"How much do you owe this man?" I asked abruptly; but feeling so indignant I could not wait to shape my phrases even into the least form of conventional politeness.

"Really, sir——"

"I beg your pardon; I am not asking out of curiosity, but with a sincere desire to be of assistance to your grandmamma if I can; and I think I can, for, though I cannot boast of any acquaintance with Mr. Browne, I know people who have influence with him, and, I dare say, could persuade him to give you time."

"Thank you very much, doctor, if you could do that I am sure poor dear gran' will get better; for it is nothing but the anxiety of these last few days that has made her ill—that and his threats."

"What threats?" I asked.

"I cannot tell you, doctor," replied the girl, with downcast eyes; "I cannot tell you. Imagine the worst you can think of, and, unless I am much mistaken, you will still be far from the truth—oh! the wretch!"

This with a bitterness that told its own tale.

I shook my head—"Perhaps it would be better to pay him at once. How much do you owe?"

"Four-and-twenty shillings; but it would be just as easy for us, or as difficult, to raise four-and-twenty pounds."

I took out my purse. "Allow me to advance you the money."

Jessie coloured. "We could never repay you—never—there is not the slightest chance—" then, in a lower voice—"if it was not for gran'ma I should not mind; do you think she will get better?"

"While there is life there is hope," I replied, quoting an old saying which, to medical men, has often proved most useful; for while reassuring to the patient and friends, it commits them to nothing. Should the sick person die, they can attribute the unfortunate accident to natural causes; but if, on the other hand, he should, flying in the face of all probability, chance to recover, they may modestly lay claim to a portion at least of the credit of saving him from an untimely end. What a profundity of humbug, not to say deception, is involved in the practice of the "noble" profession!

"While there is life, there is hope; she may, but at the same time I must tell you that she is in a very critical state; that her life is hanging, as it were, by a thread, and any shock or much excitement might induce a relapse, and a speedy and fatal termination to her illness."

Jessie hid her face in her hands for a few seconds, and then stooped down and kissed her grandmother, who pointed to me, and tried by every means in her power, but in vain, to signify her wishes, which I took upon myself to interpret.

"You see," I said, "that your grandmamma wants you to take the money; it is really only a trifle to me, so that even if you should be unable to repay me, it is not of the slightest consequence, and it will be a relief to her to know that Mr. Browne cannot molest you again, for some time at least; and, meanwhile, we shall see what is best to be done."

I spoke cheerfully, for the poor old patient needed encouraging, and continued: "Your grandmamma requires a good deal of nourishment, and you——"

Jessie's eyes filled with tears, which the brave spirit within her would not permit to overflow; by an effort, which I could see was great, she controlled herself, and said: "You might as well order me to take her to Madeira, doctor—bread and tea, with an occasional salt-herring, are the only luxuries we can afford."

There was a cynical bitterness in her soft voice that went to my heart as she spoke; and acting on the impulse of the moment, I took two sovereigns from my purse, and pressed them into the grandmother's hand. "Pay your rent, madam; and get some food for yourself and your granddaughter with the balance. This is a Christian country—at least I hope so—and—" I was about to add, "you must not perish before my eyes, while I have it in my power to assist you," but I was interrupted by a loud cry from Jessie, as she flung herself—actually flung herself—on her grandmother, and tried to force the money from the tightly-clasped hand of the old woman.

"No, gran'ma! you must not take it; you shall not. It will be better, far better, for both of us to go into the Workhouse at once; for that is what it must come to in the end. Give me that money, grand'ma; give it to me at once!"

"Stop! stop!" I exclaimed; "you will kill your grandmother, Miss Jessie. She is not in a condition to bear any excitement; and you see that she is quite willing to accept my loan. Pray control yourself, or I will not be answerable for the consequences. I will not, indeed."

Jessie relinquished her attempt; and falling, rather than sitting down, on the side of the bed, covered her face with her hands, and

sobbed aloud. Presently she cried: "It only wanted this to fill up the cup of our humiliation!"

"Nonsense!" I said, kindly. "What humiliation is there, or can there be, in accepting a small loan from a friend?—as I hope you consider me; in fact, as you said just now, you thought I was. You will retrieve your position by-and-by, and repay me."

She shook her head, but made no answer; while the old woman, by every means in her power, such as inarticulate mumbling, shaking or nodding her palsied head, and still more, by the expression, then really eloquent, of her small grey eyes, thanked me for what, after all, I had no alternative but to have done.

Once more repeating the assurance that I would send the old lady some medicine, I made my way down stairs, and out of the house to my brougham, where I began to reflect upon the consequences of the step I had taken—little imagining what it was to lead to in the end. After all, I dare say there are not many who can see further into futurity than I could—well, in point of fact, I am somewhat of a fatalist.

Somewhat, do I say? At times I scarcely know what to think; but when I do not feel well, or anything goes wrong with me, I am very apt to say, "It is of no use trying to resist fate; what is to be will be;" or, as the Laureate aptly says:

> "If it must be so, why it will be so;
> And if it be so, so be it,"

which, I imagine, is about as pretty a way of putting it as he could have hit upon, if he had puzzled his brains about it up to the present moment.

At the same time I am far from saying that every minute action of our lives has been chalked out for us from all eternity, and that we can in no wise depart therefrom; for where, then, would be the liberty we boast of? Exactly so; but still the fact remains that before every one of us, at birth, lie two roads—the one to the right, and the other to the left: one or other we are bound to follow; and which we choose too often depends on external circumstances over which we have little or no control; so that in the end it comes to this,—we have liberty to choose, but not to follow, where our inclination leads us.

Alas! I had no more the gift of prophecy than my neighbours.

The old woman would recover, so I thought—at least partially; but she would never be able to do any work again. Some means, then, must be found to enable the granddaughter to support them both, honourably, and in some degree of comfort. But, first of all, they must be got out of that wretched place, and the power of the man Browne.

Well, I thought I could not do better than lay the whole matter before my wife. Of course, I had a family of my own, and could not possibly afford to continue the liberality towards my poor old patient which I had, involuntarily as it were, that day begun; but they must not be permitted to enter the Workhouse; that was equally certain. They would both die there—the old lady in less than a week, and the granddaughter before three months.

I, who write these lines, as well as most experienced persons, know something, I may say a good deal, of the working of these precious institutions, which may answer, after a fashion, for the poor—the abjectly poor—who have lived a life of servile dependence and increasing deference to their social superiors all their days—such as they may survive, and often do, the constant humiliation, the semi-starvation, to which they are subjected in the vast, cold, heartless, soulless institutions for which we are compelled to pay so heavily in poor rates, and which are so fearfully, so odiously managed, or mismanaged; but that proud and high-spirited girl, I knew, would either die, or, unable to endure the continual torment, the perpetually recurring shame of a pauper's existence, would, in despair, cast herself on the cruel mercies of the world, to find a resting-place at last for her throbbing heart and weary limbs in the turbid waters of the river that portions this great city into halves; or, worse fate still, gradually losing hope, she might fall into the power of some such sensual brute as Browne, who, I felt sure, had already tempted her, and would, when his fancy tired, remorselessly abandon her to the death-in-life, the nameless profanation, of the streets.

The idea was too horrible! From such a fate she must be rescued at any cost. And surely among my wealthy and influential relatives, whom I would have scorned, in the direst distress, to importune for myself, something might be done—must be done—for the helpless and lovely girl, and her aged grandmother.

At all events, I would discuss the matter fully with my wife; her feminine tact would doubtless hit upon some feasible plan for their relief.

In the meantime they had, happily, nothing to fear for the next few days: then—but here my reverie was brought to an abrupt termination by the stopping of the brougham before the door of the patient whose name next occurred in my list; and the attention required by a severe case of scarlet fever banished, for the time, everything else from my thoughts: but only for a time—I had not forgotten pretty Jessie.

CHAPTER V.

As I have said before, my wife is a person of no small discernment; and I always look upon the day in which I first made her acquaintance as the most fortunate in all my life. She seems to have an intuitive perception of the best thing to be done, the best course to be pursued, under any combination of circumstances; and I invariably consult her upon every step (not purely professional) I purpose taking: nor have I ever repented following her advice except, perhaps, on one occasion; and then—well, after all, it was certainly not her fault—nobody's,,in fact—that things turned out differently to what we had all expected.

After my interview at the Rents with poor old Mrs. Josephs and her pretty granddaughter, I had quite made up my mind to relate their history, as far as I was acquainted with it, to my wife; take her opinion as to what had best be done for them, and act accordingly. But whether it was that the urgency of my scarletina case had banished them from my recollection for a time, or that I was conscious, semi-conscious rather, of not being quite as disinterested an actor in the tragi-comedy that was being enacted in that hateful alley, as I would even to myself have made it appear, perhaps I had better not too closely inquire. However, lest some reader should, in consequence of this half-admission, deem himself justified in heaping dirt upon my head, I will ask: "Where is the man, or woman either, whose motives will always bear fathoming? who, even when he, or she, takes most credit to himself, or herself, for disinterestedness, can honestly lay a steady hand on a calmly beating heart, and say that no ulterior object has suggested the course pursued?

I certainly did admire Jessie; I freely admit as much: but as to saying that I ever was in love with her, as was afterwards thrown in my teeth, the idea is simply preposterous! In the first place, she was not much older than my eldest daughter, though, to be sure, that is not much to the purpose; and, in the second, I never was in love with any one but my wife, for whom I still entertain the very same sentiments, intensified rather than blunted, with which I regarded her at the time of our marriage. At the same time, I cannot but admit that, previous to my acquaintance with her, I may have indulged in sundry more or less serious flirtations: but, as the poet says:

> "Know you not
> Such touches are but embassies of love,
> To tamper with the feelings, ere he found
> Empire for life?"

But since our marriage, upon the honour of a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, I have never wavered from my allegiance to that incomparable woman, even for an instant. Consequently, for any person to pretend that I was, at any time, in love with Jessie, is not only preposterous, but most gratuitously malicious.

No! whatever may have been the cause of my reticence at this time, it had nothing whatever to do with any tender feeling on my part towards the pretty and hapless girl, who regarded me "quite as an old acquaintance;" and whom I was anxious, most anxious, to extricate, if possible, from the position of peril and distress in which I had found her placed.

After carefully reviewing the matter in every aspect, I can, now, arrive at no other conclusion than this: namely, that the multiplicity of my engagements, the constant anxiety and never-ceasing worry of my daily increasing practice, had made serious inroads on my hitherto excellent—I had almost said 'iron'—constitution: for I had, of late, become nervous and fidgetty to a degree that surprised myself, and greatly distressed my wife; who, at last, insisted upon my advertising in the *Lancet*, as I have already related, for an assistant.

Trifling matters upon which I would not, a short time previously, have bestowed a thought, seemed to set me completely beside myself. It was too much trouble to rise from my arm-chair to speak to a patient; I could not endure the noise of the children, who were, in consequence, confined to the nursery, much to their astonishment, while I was at home; I was constantly finding fault with the boy Martin, and even, on one or two occasions, gave my trusty and highly-respectable coachman an undeserved scolding; several times, for no adequate reason, I slammed the hall-door behind me with a degree of vicious energy that shook the whole house, and mightily perplexed the children, who could not imagine what was the matter with papa. Yes, it was time, high time, I had some help, unless I wished to be altogether laid up—thus said my wife; and though I pooh-pooh'd the notion, in my heart I quite agreed with her. There was no doubt about it, over-work had given my nervous system a serious shock. However, a little rest would soon put me to rights, as I said, and hoped.

Yes, it was, undoubtedly, the well-nigh shattered state of my nerves that made me fear to confide the history of the inmates of No. 17, Rhymer's Rents to my wife. "She will suspect me," so I thought, "of some ulterior motive in the matter, unworthy of course——" A convincing proof, if any were needed, that I was not quite in a condition of cerebral equilibrium at the time, for she is one of the most innocent and unsuspicious of

mortals—yes, it was very absurd on my part, no doubt; but who is always wise?

"I shall tell her to-morrow. No, the next day, when my new assistant has come. I shall send him to visit the old lady while Jessie is out giving her lessons at the school—it would not be fair to the young fellow to expose him, unprepared, to the influence of those great blue melancholy eyes—I shall ask him about them during or after dinner; and then, quite naturally, relate their story, and, dilating upon their unfortunate position, inquire of my wife what she thinks can be done for their relief."

"No, I shall not send him at all—Jessie might come in, and it would not be fair to the youth or to the girl either; I will go myself, and when I have seen her again—the old grandmother, I mean—I shall be better able to judge as to the next step to be taken in their behalf. How I wish my assistant was here! How I wish my assistant had arrived!"

These seven last words, with occasional variations, formed the burden of my cry during the whole interval between my first meeting with Willie Page and my arrival at Essex Place. I really think I never longed so much for anything before.

I must have looked wretchedly miserable then, or been awfully disagreeable, which was not, I regret to say, at all unlikely; for several times I surprised my wife gazing at me with tears in her eyes, when she would sigh gently and say: "I shall be so glad, dear, when you have some one to help you."

But though my heart echoed her wish, I disclaimed any such desire, and even went as far as to say: "I don't think I'll engage that young fellow, after all."

So passed that day away, and was lost to us for ever, swallowed up, with all its, or our, imperfections on its head, in the fathomless abyss of eternity. Twice I was called up during the night, which did not tend to improve either my health or temper; once to a child, said to be "in a fit," but whom, on my arrival at its parents' house, I found calmly eating bread and butter; the second was a false alarm, in a case I need not further particularise.

"My poor dear," tenderly exclaimed my wife, as I got into bed for the third time that night, "how I do wish I could go out instead of you!"—the wish, I know, came from the very bottom of her heart; yet, ungrateful bear that I was! I took her kindly words in bad part, and peevishly declared that I was quite able to mind my own business; which was a —— story, and by no means a white one either.

Morning dawned at last: the morning that was to bring to me help, or rather to submit my possible assistant to my wife's in-

spection—but there! I knew perfectly well that whether she liked him or not, she would, under the circumstances, urge me to engage the young man.

Of late she had insisted on labelling and papering the bottles of medicine and powders for me, which was certainly some help; but we both knew that I required much more.

Receive from ten to twenty people in the morning, and give them physic; go out and visit some forty more, come home, make up their medicine; then receive more, up to eleven o'clock at night, and dispense for them also; then be called up two or three times during the night—I defy anyone to do it for any length of time without being, sooner or later, knocked up. I tried to do it, and was—there was no doubt about it—thoroughly prostrated. "And serve you right," some one will, perhaps, exclaim, "for being so greedy." But, dear reader, I had seven children, and an almost unlimited prospect of more, what was I to do?

Fortunately I was not disturbed again that night, and slept on until ten o'clock, when an inroad of exacting patients compelled me to get up. I then swallowed a hasty breakfast in my bedroom, and hurried downstairs, unshaved, and with my hair indifferently parted—I who used to be so particular about my appearance! It was quite time I had some assistance, or—well, yes: I felt certain I must go out of my mind. In fact, the thought occurred to me more than once that day that I must be in an incipient stage of brain disease; but happily my fears were unfounded, as will, doubtless, hereafter appear. Nevertheless, I was unusually irritable that morning; snapped at the patients in the most unreasonable manner; snubbed an old woman who came with a message; ordered one man out of the house for daring to make a suggestion as to the treatment of the complaint from which he was suffering; knocked down and broke several bottles that stood in my way, simply because they were in my way; and in kicking at a stool that somebody had left out of its place, nearly dislocated my ankle,—an incident that brought me to my senses, in a degree, and I got through the remainder of my work with tolerable composure. Fortunately it was not the vaccination morning, or I feel sure I must have really gone mad.

The last patient seen and despatched, I looked at my watch, and found that but few minutes were wanting to eleven.

"Strange, very! that my assistant that is to be has not arrived! Provoking! Perhaps he does not intend to come. He said he would, too, and looks too much a gentleman to break his word without sufficient reason. Perhaps my watch is fast: let me see."

I ran upstairs to the drawing-room in order to consult the

clock—a gift, by the way, "from several grateful patients," and really a very handsome timepiece in bronze and gilt, which keeps remarkably correct time in a general way.

Yes, the watch was quite right; it wanted just five minutes to eleven, and the young man had promised to come out by ten. He had changed his mind: that was quite certain, and very annoying, too. No matter—I had the bricklayer's address, he would be better than no one; but really—"well, I hope he knows how to behave himself at table. On the whole, I think I had better let him find his own board and lodging."

Just then I heard my wife's step on the stairs, and calling to her by name, she came in, looking surprised to see me, at that hour of the day, in the drawing-room.

"I came up to see what o'clock it is, my dear," I volunteered, in explanation of a very unusual proceeding on my part, for I rarely visited the apartment in question except on Sunday evenings.

"Just eleven," she replied, "John has this minute driven up to the door, and I was on my way to see that Martin had the carriage-warmer ready for you, for it is very cold out of doors this morning."

"Thanks," I replied, less graciously than I ought to have done. "There is no depending on that boy. I must certainly send him away."

"He is by far the best we have yet had," returned my wife—which was perfectly correct.

"Very well," I replied, snappishly, "as you please, my dear, It is no consequence, of course, how much I am inconvenienced."

My wife took no notice of my bearish remark, but quietly said: "I thought the young gentleman you saw yesterday was to have called again this morning?"

"So he said; but there is no placing any reliance on anyone or anything, it seems"—this, snappishly, as I paced up and down the room, like a wild beast in its cage at the "Zoo."

"He may come yet: it is barely eleven."

"Of course he may; but I feel sure he won't."

"Have you many to see to-day, my dear?"

"Much as usual. Thirty-eight, I think."

"I wish I could go and see some of them for you, dear."

"So you are always saying, and it is very stupid of you, for you know very well that you can't; and even if you could they wouldn't be satisfied."

I ought to have been shot for such a brutal speech, and my only excuse is that at the time my nervous system was really so unsettled that I was not responsible for anything I said or did.

"John is at the door," quietly observed my wife, without even a shade of anger or displeasure in her voice.

"So you said before," I snarled. "It is quite evident you want to get me out of the house—I am going. One consolation, it must all come to an end some day."

What a brute I was! even supposing me to be temporarily, demented. The poor dear woman's eyes brimmed up full of tears; but she turned away her head that I should not perceive them fall. I did, however, and my conscience smote me a sharp blow, so that I was on the point of falling down on my knees before her and begging her pardon, when a long and loud "double-knock" at the street-door caused us both to start, and diverted our thoughts from my unpleasant and irrational temper.

"The assistant!" exclaimed the lady of the house, in accents of profound relief.

"Another patient," I replied, as I hastily ran down stairs, hoping her guess was right.

As I reached the foot of the stairs, the page opened the door to a small girl, about nine years old, the very one, in fact, who had found out "No. 17" for me in Rhymer's Rents, but dirtier and more dishevelled than ever, and carrying in one hand a broken tea-cup, and in the other a large door-key.

"Please," she shrieked in her harsh and disagreeable treble, "mother wants three ha'porth of castor-hoil; and she said you was to be sure and give her the best in your shop."

"Child, child!" I exclaimed, waving the grimy urchin back with repelling hands, "is this a shop?" Then more loudly, "Go, "Go, get you gone! Boy, open the door, and put that creature out!"

It was too bad! I sat down on the bench in the hall, and covered my face with my hands.

It was too bad, too bad! was it not, indeed, the last straw that broke the camel's back?

CHAPTER VI.

"WHEN things are at the worst they sometimes mend," sang one of the most gifted and unfortunate of men, in years gone by; and really there is some amount of truth in the saying—according to my experience, at any rate.

Conceive, if you can, O reader, sympathising reader, a more unenviable position than mine, as described at the close of the last chapter. Broken down in health by unceasing and most harassing toil, yet struggling with might and main, for the sake of my family, to keep up appearances—which count for so much, in this nineteenth century, with the men of this Janus-faced genera-

tion; the wisest, the most accomplished, the profounded thinkers and most subtle calculators that ever did, or ever will, exist—fancy me who, during fifteen years of "general practice," had calmly, not to say indifferently (after the first few months), taken the rough and smooth alike, from whom insult and ingratitude had harmlessly recoiled, as water from the back of a duck, or bullets from the scales of a crocodile—fancy *me* breaking down and crying, actually shedding tears, before my servant, because a small girl had mistaken my house for a chemist's shop, and had asked me for "three ha'porth of the best castor hoil!" Fancy that, O reader, and, pitying me, say if the worst that could happen to me had not, indeed, come to pass—if the last straw had not, truly, been laid upon the back of the overloaded camel?

Even now I shudder when I think of that incident, and the profoundly depressed mental and physical condition to which I must have been induced—a condition so closely bordering on total aberration of intellect that I tremble at thought of the abyss upon the brink of which I stood that morning—of the awful climax that might—that must—have supervened had I not found speedy and efficient relief.

Happily the feeling of extreme depression was but momentary; and, rallying myself by a strong effect, I staggered to my feet and hurried up stairs, attempting, in the most ghastly manner, I feel sure, to smile, and then to hum a tune!—a further proof, if more were needed, of the utterly shattered state of my nervous system, for I have as much ear for music as my old dog, that no sooner hears one of the girls touch the piano than he rushes to the door, howling dismally until he is let out, though Charlotte Elizabeth really plays uncommonly well for her age, and Helen Maria too.

Yes, without for a moment considering what I was about, or, perhaps, with some vague idea of hoodwinking the page, who had been an amazed witness of my humilation, I rushed up stairs, humming a tune—"Gentle Spring," if I remember rightly—and most ghastly I must have looked; for my wife, who was coming down, started back and stared at me for two seconds with astonishment, not to say terror, depicted on her face, before she could find words to exclaim:

"My dear, what has happened?"

"Happened," I repeated after her, almost unconsciously; then as the idea that she had spoken, and the sense of her words, flashed upon me, I smiled a ghastly smile, and replied, in what I intended for a jocular manner: "Happened, love? Oh, nothing at all; only a child wanting three ha'porth of castor oil for her mother—funny, aint it?" and I burst into a loud and "hysterical" laugh.

"You are not well, dear," said my wife, tenderly, for my manner and look alarmed her; "you are not well; do go and lie down for an hour, or shall I get you a glass of wine, or a little brandy?"

"That I may smell of it, and have people saying that I am intoxicated—as they say of Blank and Noone. No, thanks! I'm right enough; a little put out, that's all"—and I turned to go downstairs again.

Just then there was a double-knock at the street-door—not loud and exacting, like that of the "castor-hoil" girl, nor indefinitely prolonged, like that of the man who called weekly for the rent of the stable; but quiet and gentlemanly, or perhaps I should say lady-like; for when she heard it, my wife exclaimed: "Mrs. Mortimer, I declare! I do wish she would not call so early."

At the summons the page rushed up from the lower regions and opening the door, as I stepped on to the mat at the foot of the stairs, admitted, not Mrs. Mortimer, our good Vicar's excellent help-meet, but the young fellow whom I had hoped to call my assistant, but who, I feared, had changed his mind, and would not appear again.

I never experienced such a sense of profound relief in all my life—not even, I think, when my first child was happily born.

I could have thrown up my hat and shouted, or done fifty other things as ridiculous; but I did not. I restrained myself, and advancing towards the youth, upon whom I really seemed to look quite in the light of an old acquaintance, shook hands with him quietly, and introduced him to my wife, who had followed me down the stairs, and was standing just behind me in the hall.

She, too, looked pleased, for she saw that my relief was at hand, and greeted the young man with genuine cordiality.

"Come in," I said, addressing the youth, and leading the way into the dining-room; "I began to think you were not coming."

The young man looked up with an expression of surprise, and asked, "Was it not agreed yesterday that I was to call on you again to-day?"

I assented.

"Just so," he replied; as much as to say that had he been ever so minded to break his promise, his sense of honour would have prevented him from doing so.

"You are rather late," remarked my wife, by way of saying something, I suppose.

"Yes," he answered; "I forgot to wind up my watch last night, and did not think I was so late in getting up as I was."

"No matter," I replied, "as you are here. Can you come to me—to us?"

"Yes," he answered, with a quiet smile at my self-correction, as I thought.

"To-day or to-morrow?" inquired my wife, who was anxious on my account.

"To-day," he replied.

"You will have to go back for your luggage."

He smiled again. "I have it outside in the cab. I thought I might as well bring it, and save myself a journey, or rather two, in case you engaged me."

"Right!" I exclaimed; "I am very glad you did. Martin!" going to the parlour-door and shouting down the kitchen-stairs, "here, sharp!" then, as the page appeared, "Run out to the cab, and bring in this gentleman's luggage."

"Portmanteau and hat-box," explained the youth.

Hat-box and portmanteau were speedily transferred from the cab to the house, and conveyed to the room which had been allotted to the new assistant.

"What do you think of him?" I inquired of my wife, as soon as the young fellow had left us to go to his room.

"I dare say he will answer very well," she replied; "but he certainly does look rather young."

"So he does, my dear; but do not you think he has a firm, decided manner that will go far to counteract the effect of his youthful appearance?"

"I dare say," returned my wife, with a gentle sigh, which was certainly one of relief; for she continued, "I am so glad you have got some one at last to take the drudgery off your hands!"

"Thanks, dearest!" and like honest John Gilpin I kissed my loving wife, though we have been married nearly "twice ten tedious years," as heartily as ever I did in my life; dear, good little woman! I kissed her and she kissed me again; let mock us whoso dare.

It was getting late, nearly twelve o'clock, and my round not yet begun! "This will never do!" I exclaimed, glancing at my watch. "I must be off, my dear. When Mr. Page comes down, will you show him the Surgery? He can amuse himself looking up the medicines until dinner time. Good-bye."

What a change had come over me within the last few minutes! Wonderfully lighter were my spirits, and my headache almost gone. I walked to my brougham with quite a juvenile alacrity, and after giving the necessary directions to my man, sat down with much complacency in my favourite corner, adjusting my rug round me with more than ordinary care; then let the window down two pegs lower than usual, and looked out.

How pleasant the road appeared, and how much neater the front gardens of the terrace, and the street children, were than usual!

"It is really astonishing!" I thought. "Have I got a frag-

ment of Hans Andersen's wonderful mirror in my eye?" Scarcely, for that distorted everything, whereas everything to me seemed *couleur de rose.*

Wonderful! what a change a few minutes will work in a man's feelings and temper! That morning I was dissatisfied with, and grumbling at, everything; everything, even the most ordinary duty was a trouble; then, I do not think the most surly and provoking answer from the most ungrateful of patients would have had power to make me more than slightly shrug my shoulders and smile a pitying smile.

Just so; a veritable magician was Master Page—or a fairy, a beneficent fairy prince in disguise, with ivory wand transforming each dull, heavy clod or stone on life's pathway into shining gold, and the briars and thistles of existence into lilies and roses?

By no means; simply a good-looking and apparently amiable young fellow, whom I have been fortunate enough to secure for my assistant, at the moderate rate of fifty pounds a-year, with board and lodging—washing not included. This latter clause a proviso in the agreement insisted on by my wife, who has the sole management of the domestic concerns and regulations of the partnership—household, I mean; and doubtless has good and sufficient reasons for insisting that it should be so.

Yes; my assistant—that was the secret, in that word of three syllables lay the charm that had transformed me in so short a time, from a morose, cranky, sour, crab-apple individual, whom very little more would have driven to utter distraction, into an amiable, smiling, contented—but hold! *verbum sat.*

How much more agreeable, too, seemed some of the patients that day, not nearly as querulous and impatient as usual! and their friends much less captious and exacting!

Poor old Mrs. Josephs, too, was decidedly better; she could even speak intelligibly, if not with her accustomed fluency—thus her granddaughter, pretty Jessie, who was certainly far prettier than even I had thought her on the previous day. Poor little girl! we must see what can be done for her. I will tell my wife all about them after dinner. I cannot imagine why I did not do so yesterday. Certainly, as my children say when one of them is not in a good humour, which sometimes happens, though not often, I must have had a black bear on my back, and very ugly it must have looked; if as hideous to others as it was uncomfortable to me; but, thank goodness, it was gone.

Truly, as the poet says: "When things are at the worst they sometimes mend."

RECOLLECTIONS OF AN INDIAN MAGISTRATE.

THE MISSING DISCIPLE.

THE bell sounded dolefully in the *astul* of the venerable Diogir Gossain, a holy and blamless monk of Etawah, who had for a whole day missed his favourite disciple, Beharigir, whom he regarded almost with the affection of a parent, and for whom he was necessarily much afflicted.

"Where can Beharigir have gone?" asked Toorsee of Indurjeet. "He was so fond of the old man that it seems impossible that he should have deserted him."

"Deserted him! That is out of the question. It is not in the nature of Beharigir to act so. I am afraid he has had foul play from Monoburgir, whose feelings against him have always been bitter."

"He was last seen in the company of Monoburgir by Golab, and I have a great mind to ask the knave roundly whether he knows where Beharigir is at present."

"Let us go to him together," said Indurjeet, "and charge him directly with having made away with Beharigir. We shall be able to judge from his reply whether he knows anything about him or not."

The speakers were two personal friends of Beharigir, and were also acquainted with Monoburgir, who had at one time been a disciple of the old Gossain along with Beharigir. Monoburgir, while so employed, misbehaved, and his offence was so hienious that Diogir was obliged to turn him out of the *astul*. This made Monoburgir vindictive, and he brought an action in the civil court for the possession of certain lands which were held in the name of the old man, but had been acquired by the exertions of his *chelâhs*; and in the court of first instance Monoburgir got a decree for a portion of the lands. This decision was reversed on appeal, the higher court holding that the entire property belonged to the *astul*, and not to either monk or disciple individually, and that no partition of it could be made till the *astul* was dissolved. This reversal of judgment was obtained almost wholly by the exertions of Behárigir, who managed the case on behalf of his master; and it produced a jealousy and hatred against him on the part of Monoburgir, which the latter took no pains to conceal. It seems,

however, that he subsequently made friends with Beharigir, though in what way and to what extent were not generally known. They were seen together in earnest conversation only a short time before Beharigir disappeared.

Monoburgir, being questioned directly by Toorsee and Indurjeet, refused to say whether he knew anything about Beharigir's flight or concealment.

"Why, what objection have you to give us what information you may have on the subject?" demanded Toorsee.

"You have no right to be impertinent, Toorsee; and I never answer impertinencies."

"Our duty is very clear, Monoburgir. Goleb knows that you called away Beharigir yesterday from the *astul*; we saw him in your company afterwards, and have never seen him since. We must tell this to the police."

"Do so, then," said Monoburgir, in a sharp, angry voice; "but get off from my place at once."

The police being informed, a search for Beharigir was set on foot promptly, and, next morning his body was found, wrapt in a blanket, in a well at a mile's distance from the place where Monoburgir resided. Monoburgir was thereupon arrested, along with three of his companions, named Bahadoor, Pursbadee, and Purwa; and, on Monoburgir's information, Toorsee, Indurjeet, and Golab were also taken into custody.

Monoburgir confessed, but afterwards withdrew his confession when the main object held in view by him, to criminate Toorsee, Indurjeet, and Golab, was defeated. His statement was that he had always hated Beharigir, even when they were disciples of the monk together, because it was then understood that on Diogir's death Beharigir was to succeed him as *sabart* or monk of the *astul*. This hatred was intensified on his expulsion from the *astul* and his defeat in litigation, when he resolved to destroy Beharigir. To attain this end he ingratiated himself with Beharigir, by telling him that he had discovered some hidden treasure which he would point out to him for the *astul* if Beharigir would use his influence with old Diogir to get him taken back as a disciple. The bait being successful, Beharigir agreed to visit him in his house privately, and when he was fairly in his toils, he was attacked by the accomplices whom Monoburgir had intermediately secured, and was strangled by them. Monoburgir's statement was that Toorsee held down Beharigir while Indurjeet put the string round his neck with the aid of Golab; but there was no proof whatever of the complicity of any of those parties. What was proved was that Monoburgir threw his victim down while Bahadoor strangled him, and that Pursbadee and Purwa, after stripping the body of

the ornaments worn by the deceased, rolled it up in a blanket and conveyed it to the well into which it was thrown.

Monoburgir and Bahadoor were accordingly convicted as principals, and capitally punished; while Purshadee and Purwa, as accomplices, were sentenced to transportation for life.

Poor old Diogir was inconsolable for the loss sustained by him, and he died a short time after, blessing Beharigir's name to the last. The *astul* was closed after the death of the monk; the property belonging to it was bequeathed by him to the poor.

MOUZA CHAK; A LOVE TALE OF MONGHYR.

"FATHER! father! come sharp to the window and see," exclaimed a boy of about eight or ten years to Sháh Mowsum, the owner of Mouza Chak, in Monghyr.

"Why, what is it?" asked Mowsum, without moving from his seat.

"Oh, a number of people! some twenty, thirty, or forty—I cannot count how many—are all driving a large herd of cattle before them," said the boy.

"Where to? in what direction?" asked the father anxiously.

"Yonder, on the road leading to the Chák fields; and they have large sticks in their hands to goad the cattle on."

Mowsum rose from his seat in deep despair. "It must be that bitch, Nowlásso, bent on tormenting me! God knows I have done all in my power to settle amicably with her, but she will not have it so. Woe betide her for the trouble she is giving me!"

The Chák estate belonged to Sháh Mowsum, but one Mussamut Nowlásso, a distant relative, had claimed a share in it. She had no right whatever in the land, and the collector, after full inquiry, had rejected her claim. But Nowlásso was not to be so baulked. Finding legal fraud to be powerless, she had granted a lease of her imaginery share to an English adventurer named George Collins, whose son, William, owned an indigo factory within a mile of Chák.

"Did he think he would escape me because I am a woman? His business is settled now, I hope. Had he married one *Niká*, as he had promised, Nowlásso would have lived and died his slave. He that would not have me had no right to count on my forbearance."

The bait was well laid. Young Collins was a reckless adventurer, who only wanted firm hold of an inch to take an ell. Acting on the lady's grant, he collected a large number of *budmashes* from

the villages near Chák, the inhabitants of which are well-known for their turbulence, and was driving cattle on the Chák lands to dispossess the tenants of the rightful owner.

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"There is a legion of devils coming upon us," exclaimed Goodur Cáhár, one of the ryots of Mowsum, "and they are headed by that arch-fiend, Chummun Sing."

"Is the *sáheb*, Chummun's master, with them?" asked another tenant; "for, if not, I don't care so much for Chummun but that I would resist him."

"I don't see the *sáheb*, but he must be at hand, I think. Whether he is or not, however, does not matter, for the trespass must be opposed."

The resistance made was not very violent, but Collins' English blood was up, that even a show of opposition had been made, and he ordered that the opposers be well thrashed. A violent affray ensued, and Goodur Cáhár, who offered the greatest resistance, was struck down.

"Don't spare him!" exclaimed Collins. "He is the most mutinous rascal of the whole lot. Lay on him as hard as you can; thrash him within an inch of his life:" and the fallen man was beaten by so many ruffians, and in such a cowardly manner, that he was soon covered with blood.

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"Well, what do you think of the business now, sir?" asked Chummun Sing, of Collins; "I wish we had not killed him outright."

"I wish so too," replied Collins. "You have exceeded my orders. I only wanted him to be well beaten, but not to be killed."

"Master is getting funky, I think," remarked Chummun Sing, with a roguish twinkle in his eye.

Collins bit his lips, but the man had spoken the truth.

"Let master, however, be re-assured," added Chummun. "I hold myself responsible for old Goodur's death, and will take the consequences. He was my rival all life through, and had always been crossing my path as thief, cut-purse, and bandit. There cannot be two suns in one system, nor two characters like myself and Goodur in Monghyr."

Collins was *non est*, while Chummun Sing and six others were taken up by the police and brought to trial. The prisoners pleaded "Not Guilty," and said that the deceased had died of bowel complaint. The evidence of eye-witnesses was that he was beaten to death, and this was confirmed by the doctor's testimony, based on the state of the body as he found it. Chummun, nevertheless, contended that he might still have died of internal diseases.

"There was some fighting between us, to be sure, and he may have been hurt a little by it. But if there had been no beating at all he would have died all the same."

"You admit the beating, then, and will doubtless be reconciled to the punishment that will be inflicted on you for it; but even if there had been no admission, the punishment for you would have been all the same."

"I knew it would be so," replied Chummun, unabashed; "and am satisfied that Mr. Collins does not stand in my place. He has often helped me in my difficulties, and I wanted to repay his kindness."

Chummun Sing was sentenced to imprisonment for seven years, with labour and irons; and the other prisoners to imprisonment for smaller terms, according to their share in the affray.

Sháh Mowsum did pretty well afterwards, though he would not still have Nowlásso for his mate; and Nowlásso was obliged to digest her chagrin and lead a lonely life.

RIGHT AFTER ALL.

A DACOITY was committed in a village east of Gurbettá, in the district of Midnapore, in the house of a Chassie-Gowálá named Kissen Prasád Házra, by a gang of about twenty persons, who carried off almost all the property the poor man was possessed of. The loss being reported to the police, a prompt inquiry was made to trace out and capture the delinquents; but there was no clue to them, and the search had eventually to be abandoned.

"Do you suspect any of your neighbours of having had a hand in the business, Hazra?" asked the baffled *thannadar*, still unwilling to give up the inquiry finally.

"No, I don't. I have told you already that the dacoits conversed together with each other in Hindee, or some other lingo of that sort, of which no one in the neighbourhood has any knowledge My impression is that they were up-countrymen, not Bengalis."

"Well, I am unable to find them out, then, and cannot waste more time in the search. They are d——d precious scoundrels, and almost seem to deserve the booty they have secured."

"I am not not surprised to hear you say so," remarked Kissen Prasad; "but it will go very hard with me, for they have robbed me of everything I had."

"Take better care of your earthly goods next time, friend," responded the *thannadar*, wishing to be witty; "or better still, don't burden yourself with much property again. Nothing but harm comes of them, you know."

When the police gave up the job as hopeless there was, of course, nothing more for Hazra to do but to keep quiet over his loss; and the dacoity was almost entirely forgotten even by him in a few years.

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"I always thought that I watched very vigilantly over the Bhuddruck dacoits," said the Superintendent for the Suppression of Dacoity to his deputy, some ten years after; "but I have lost sight of some of my lambs for years, and do not know whither they have strayed."

"They are probably not acting as lambs now," said the deputy. "They are, perhaps, trying to mend their fortunes in the shape of foxes or jackals."

"That is my impression, too; and I find from the Midnapore reports that many people are wandering about that district, leading a vagrant life, ostensibly following the idle trade of catching and selling birds and wild animals."

"Shall I set an approver over them to worm out their secret, if they have any?"

"Do so, by all means. I cannot shut out the idea from my mind that the two facts are closely related to each other."

An approver was employed in the manner indicated, and after keeping company with the vagrants for some months, he discovered several of them to be professional dacoits.

"Have you a personal knowledge of any of them?"

"No; but I have watched their language and habits, and have no hesitation in saying that they are robbers."

"They were taken up as such; but what evidence was there against them?"

"Sir," said the approver, "they will confess?"

"Confess!" exclaimed the magistrate, "I have no objection to take down their confession; but they must understand distinctly that no terms whatever can be made with them, and that whatever they state will be used against them."

"That is hard," said Bhoourka, one of the parties taken up; "surely the saheb ought at least to punish us lightly if we make a clean breast of our crimes!"

"Doubtless he will," said Sabaree, another of the band; "only the Sicar Bahadoor will not allow him to say so."

"What a set of ignoramuses you all must be," said Kally Sing, a third man, "not to understand that the *hakim* would not have expressed his willingness to take down our confessions if he had not made up his mind to liberate us!"

"That is just it," put in Pal Chaud. "Let us disclose everything to him, and he will have no alternative but to liberate us."

The *hakim* was told, therefore, that, notwithstanding his warm-

ing, the prisoners were still anxious to confess fully, if he would permit them to do so.

"Oh, yes; with all my heart; since you now understand clearly that they are not to build any idle expectations on their confessions."

The confession of the prisoners was that they had followed the profession of dacoits in the Midnapore district for ten years, occasionally with success, but as a rule not very profitably. One of their most successful enterprises was about the very first dacoity they attempted in the district, namely, an attack on the house of a villager in the precincts of Gurbetta, from which considerable property was carried off.

"Can you point out the house now?"

"Yes;" and the house pointed out was that of Kissen Prasad.

"I said so from the first," observed old Hazra, "that the men who had robbed me were up-countrymen, and not Bengalis. See, I am right after all."

"Yes, you are," replied the old *thannadar*, who had since become a daroga; "but there was no clue for me then to go by."

All the prisoners were convicted, and this alarmed them so much that they attempted in a body to break through the guards who surrounded them. One of them only, namely, Kally Sing, succeeded in doing so, and was never afterwards heard of. The rest were sent to ten years' imprisonment each.

THE DREAD OF THE POLICE.

The halting-ground at Khoorja, in Boohindshuhur, is well known and much resorted to. From this place a pair of bullocks belonging to a cartman, named Gunesh, were stolen, and, information being given to the police, they were traced up to the village of Bhojpore, where the track was lost.

"Now, what can we do for the poor man?" asked the Kotwal of his deputy. "I am new to this part of the country, and am willing to assist as you may advise."

"Summon the zemindars and assemble a *punchayet*, and tell the *punchayet* that the delinquent must be discovered."

The Kotwal's eyes brightened at the suggestion, and he instantly had all the neighbouring zemindars brought together, among whom was one Khoobee, a shareholder in a village named Koarsee, which was three miles distant from Bhojpore.

"What are your commands?" asked the zemindars of the Kotwal.

"Oh, good men and true, I wish you to hold a *punchayet*, and discover me the thief who has stolen a pair of bullocks belonging

to this poor cartman; and be it well understood between us that the thief and the stolen cattle must be found."

The *punchayet* sat accordingly, and the members were unanimously of opinion that one of their number—namely, Khoobee should be sent in search of the bullocks. The fact was that Khoobee was suspected by them of being connected with cattle-stealers, and they wanted to book him.

"Now be wary and careful, Khoobee," said the Kotwal, "for as I have said already, both the thief and the bullocks must be found."

"I shall try my best to find both," said Khoobee, as he rose to depart.

Two days after, Khoobee came back with the stolen cattle, and said that he had recovered them from a *goojur*, named Kanjee, after giving him thirty rupees worth of jewellery.

"But that was not the bargain between us," said the Kotwal. "You were to have brought the *goojur* with you, Khoobee."

"Yes, sir; but he would not come."

"Would not come!" exclaimed the Kotwal. "How is that? Have we not the power to compel his attendance?"

"Ah, sir, no!" said one of the members of the *punchayet*; "for Khoobee refers to a man who died some two years ago."

"Indeed! Why that, of course, alters the case materially; and Khoobee will perhaps himself point out to us how a self-convicted thief should be dealt with."

Khoobee's features were stamped with despair. He flung himself at the feet of the Kotwal without saying a word.

"I hate scenes, Khoobee, so you had better get up. There is one chance of your escaping punishment—mind, only one. You must have heard that very recently some property was plundered from the Government mail-cart, consisting of gold mohurs and other articles. If you can help me in recovering that property, and in capturing the dacoits, I shall be very glad to extend my protection to you."

Khoobee hesitated.

"Well, Khoobee, what say you to my offer? Will you discover the dacoits and get back the gold mohurs?"

"How? by what means am I to find out either?"

"By the same art by which you have recovered the bullocks," said the Kotwal, with a hoarse laugh; and Khoobee, grinning through his fears, was obliged to agree.

"You had better, then, take two of my men with you," said the Kotwal, unwilling to give Khoobee any chance of escape; and so Khoobee departed, escorted by two stalwart burkundanzes especially selected for the purpose.

Khoobee managed to separate himself from his watchers, and then hurried home to bid adieu to his wife.

"I am obliged to fly from this place, Cheyn Kooar," said he, "though I know not whither to proceed; and it will be long, very long, before I can come back to you again."

"Why, where do you go to? What do you mean?"

"Ruin has overtaken me," said the unhappy husband. "The Kotwal insists on my discovering the gold mohurs plundered from the Government mail-cart. I know that none of our people had a hand in that business, and I shall never be able, therefore, to make the discovery; and, having been convicted of cattle theft, they will maltreat me and you also if I remain here."

"But how can the Kotwal maltreat you?" returned Cheyn Kooar. "You are only suspected, but have not been legally convicted of stealing the bullocks. Remain here and brazen it out. There is no evidence to convict you."

But Khoobee's heart failed him, and he would not listen; and he made haste to leave the village lest the guards set over him should trace out and overtake him. As a loving wife, Cheyn Kooar sent after him all their relations and friends.

"You have nothing to fear," they all said to him. "We will stand by you and protect you from the Kotwal." But Khoobee knew better—it was not in their power to protect him. "What I fear," said he, "is not the legal punishment for my offence, but the insult and maltreatment I am sure to be subjected to before trial by the Kotwal."

The parties who had joined Khoobee were his nephew Hurdeo, a very intimate friend named Bhowany, and four of his immediate neighbours. They spoke little, and Khcobee blubbered like a child.

"Why do you not kill me, Hurdeo!" at last broke forth the poor man. "My life has become worthless to me. See, I have brought a sword. Oh, my dear nephew, put my griefs and fears at an end with it, and I will bless you with my dying breath."

Hurdeo received the sword, but, after looking at the face of his uncle, threw it down, and retreated a few steps, crying bitterly.

Khoobee now appealed to Bhowany, and laid hold of his feet.

"My life is not to be borne. I beseech you, Bhowany, for our friendship's sake, to terminate it with this sword."

"Does Hurdeo permit it?" asked Bhowany, with a hoarse voice, turning towards the nephew.

Hurdeo nodded assent, and Bhowany, taking the sword from

Khoobee, struck him two smart blows, the second of which was fatal. He then flung the sword from him and strode away.

An attempt was made by Khoobee's relations to hush up the crime, but it was ineffectual. All the persons who had joined Khoobee on the road after his departure from Koarsee were tried and convicted, two as accomplices in murder, and the rest as accessories. The first two—namely, Bhowany who killed him, and Hurdeo who had assented to his being killed—were sentenced to fourteen years' imprisonment each; the rest to terms of imprisonment varying from seven to nine years.

THE UNFORTUNATE INVITATION.

THERE lived two rich widows in Mouza Bhojepore, in Moorshedabad, namely, the relicts of two brothers named Baboo Jan Shureef, and Jijri Jan Shureef, and they had both a reputation for religion and hospitality.

Said one to the other: "It would be a very good thing if we feasted the holy men of the Mouza, and received their benedictions."

"Truly so," was the answer; "but there is this difficulty in the matter: our holy men here are divided into factions—the Kazees and the Mirás, and if we invite them all together, they are sure to create a disturbance."

"Oh, sister, that is no difficulty at all!" was the prompt response. "Let us have one faction here this month, and the other say two months after."

This was agreed to, and a toss up being in favour of the Kazees, they were first invited.

"The spirit of Fatima is in the heart of these ladies!" exclaimed the delighted Kazees. "Surely they are both blessed women who prefer us to the Miras;" and they proceeded to the house of the ladies in a large body, and enjoyed the feast given to them right heartily.

Two months after it came to the turn of the Miras to be invited.

Should we go? why were we not invited before?" asked Kurban, one of the Miras.

"Oh!" said Baber Ali, the head man of the clan, "the ladies have judged well. On all great occasions beggars are always first disposed of, before respectable people are invited to sit down."

This was a settler, and the Miras, accepting the invitation, resolved to go to the feast in a body, as the Kazees had done before them.

"Are the women mad?" exclaimed Kabil, the head man of the Kazee party. "What do they mean by inviting the Miras to the same honour as ourselves?"

"Let us put a spoke in the wheel, then," said Wabid Ali, one of his followers. "We can easily prevent our opponents from going."

"How? By stopping them in a body?"

"Just so; that is, if you wish it."

"Yes, Wahid, I do wish it. Make the necessary preparations at once, and see you do them well."

The Kazees proceeded in small numbers to a point of the road where it divided into two branches, both of which led to the house of the great ladies, and here they sat down under the foot of a large tamarind tree, concealing their arms. They were nearly one hundred and twenty in number, while the Miras who were coming up were about seventy or seventy-five only.

"You cannot pass this way," exclaimed the Kazees, as soon as the Miras were in sight.

"Why?" demanded the Miras. "Who is to stop us, and what for?"

"I," said Kabil Kazee, "will stop you, and only to please myself."

"Will you?" said Kurban Mira. "*Mar, Salako!*"

The word "Mar" had an electric effect on both parties, and they assailed each other at once with clods of earth. Coming nearer, each party had recourse to their *latties*, and some heavy blows fell on both sides. Baber Ali Mira now fired a gun that he had with him, and the Kazees retreated a little, Wahid Ali being shot in the foot. But they rallied immediately after and renewed the fight, all save Wahid, who was obliged to keep behind.

"Ha, *Salla!* Art thou armed with a gun, and shalt thou escape me?" cried out Kabil Kazee, who was armed with a *tenta*, or three-pronged spear used in catching fish; and in the next moment Baber Ali was pierced through the heart, Kurban being also wounded on the hip.

The Miras now took to flight; there was no feasting for them that day.

"Well, Kabil, what are we to do now?"

"Surrender ourselves to the police," was the bold reply.

A good many of the Kazees did come forward to surrender themselves, including Kabil Kazee and Wahid Ali, but others had to be sought for before they were apprehended. They were all tried and convicted of creating a causeless affray, attended with homicide, and were sentenced each to transportation for life. Wahid Ali only, not having taken an active part in the affray on being wounded, was sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment.

A BROKEN HEART.

THE PAST.

ONCE, when the heart for purest love is rife,
Love mine had moved.
Once, and once only, in the prime of life,
I dearly loved.
Once, and then only have I felt such pain—
This heart was torn.
Once, and once only, have I loved in vain,
And been forlorn!

THE PRESENT.

A desert now the wide world is to me!
Devoid of hope!
Blindly and listless, upon land and sea,
My way I grope.
Night yields no rest, the breaking morn I dread;
There is no charm
On such a wound as mine can ever shed
A healing balm!

THE FUTURE.

By disappointment cursed, the world I roam
In sultry gloom:
And sadly know for me there is no home
But in the tomb!
Beyond this desert an oasis lies,
Where I would flee;
But, if with wings thereunto I would rise,
Death's must they be!

CECIL MAXWELL-LYTE.

HEARTS;

OR, ENGLAND A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

CHAPTER V.

Which tries to describe what cannot be described.

An hour or two later the same morning Roger Giffard was hammering away at Ralph's bedroom door. The two brothers were close together in the bachelor's part of the house, and they were, therefore, too far off from those of their cousins and of the Squire for any noise made there to reach their ears; so Roger went on kicking lustily at the door with his foot, and drumming on it with his fist, as a sort of running accompaniment to his words:

"I have a great mind to be off and bathe without you, you lazy beggar! It is half an hour since I called you, and I do believe you are still under the bed-clothes. Luckily for you, you have locked the door for the first time in your life. Open it, Ralph,—I say, open it. Honour bright, I promise not to play you any tricks."

"I don't care to bathe this morning, old fellow," said Ralph under the bed-clothes, as Roger had suspected.

"Oh, nonsense, you must! It's a glorious morning. Open the door and I'll wait for you."

Ralph, knowing his brother would not leave him in quiet, turned the key, and Roger walked into the room. Roger was, in truth, longing to communicate his happiness to his brother; but, after looking at him, instead of talking about Hetty, he exclaimed:

"I say, Ralph, you have been burning the midnight oil with a vengeance—just go to the glass and look at your eyes."

"What is the matter with my eyes?" said Ralph, hastily dressing himself as he turned away his face.

"If they don't feel weak it doesn't signify; but they are quite blood-shot."

"That's for want of my beauty-sleep," said Ralph. "I'm ready—come along."

Roger usually spoke little of Hetty, but he loved his brother too well to keep him in ignorance of his engagement, so he told him, in a few words, the story of his perfect happiness; and Ralph, swallowing his own mortification in silence, wished Roger joy from the bottom of his heart, and pressed his brother's hand with the same genuine warmth of feeling as Roger felt in giving it.

They passed through the garden, noticing that it looked especially beautiful in the soft light of early morning. The birds, less shy than later in the day, hopped on the paths, and flew in and out of the bushes in search of food for their young, or, to allure their mates, trilled the gay notes that sound to us so like a thanksgiving for the glorious advent of summer.

The brothers walked shoulder to shoulder and kept step as they went; but Roger did not notice that Ralph left him to do all the talking. They were a good deal alike, and it would have been matter of surprise to a stranger that both Honoria and Hester should have liked Roger so much the best. There was nothing remarkable in the appearance of either. They are just such fine young fellows as England sends forth by thousands, year after year, to all parts of the earth, besides keeping a very plentiful supply of them for use at home. Such men as swarm in our ships, universities, camps, barracks, and law courts, are sometimes trusted to feel ladies' pulses, or to receive the tributary offerings of grateful flocks, chiefly feminine, as spiritual pastors and masters,—Englishmen, in the pride of their youth and the prime of their lives, strong of arm, straight of limb, clear of head, and stout of heart, and, what is better still, true of word, and strict of conscience.

Ralph, in his way, had suffered as much as his cousin Honoria, but there are depths in a man's nature that no woman can understand. His love for Roger was a love purer and less selfish than any Honoria was capable of imagining, much less of feeling. He determined to stifle the vain yearnings that had hitherto filled his heart, and never suffer Roger to know that he had ever loved Hester.

So the young men walked on together. Roger's spaniel continually coming to his master with loving eyes and slobbering tongue to have his stick thrown into the water for him, and when the oak sapling went whizzing through the air and fell among the water-lilies, rushing in with a great splash to fetch it out, and coming up all dripping, and laying it just in his master's way, down at his feet, and then looking up for praise and wagging his tail furiously, as conscious of merit of the most distinguished order.

And so Roger and Ralph passed along under the willows, and away by the river's side, until they had gone half a mile from the house where Hester slept, and the Squire was getting up to look after his haymakers, and Honoria shivered from head to foot as she dressed after a sleepless night.

There—I cannot tell you—I have set myself a task I cannot perform—besides, it was never known exactly how it happened—it is true that the haymakers as they came down from the hill on the

other side of the bridge saw the brothers bathing. At first they kept near each other, but soon one of them—believed to have been Roger—swam out to a considerable distance. Suddenly they missed him, and saw only the dog in the water, and Ralph swimming towards the spot where Roger had gone down. When Roger rose to the surface, Ralph tried to support him, and to keep his head above the water; but Roger caught his brother by the neck and clung to him with the wild grip of a drowning man, depriving him of all power to extricate himself, and they both sank.

It is well that when we read of such sad accidents we realise but faintly the misery they bring to happy homes made desolate for evermore—to relatives bereaved of all that make life dear. Who can picture the sudden horror of the scene enacted at Hearts, as every effort was made to restore animation, under the direction of a skilful surgeon, instantly summoned, and all was done in vain? —the compassion the heart-broken Hetty excited, as she cried ceaselessly hour after hour—the admiration elicited by Honoria's self-possession and extraordinary presence of mind? As for the Squire, he broke down altogether, sat sobbing like a child, and was quite incapable of giving orders about anything. When informed, at his own request, of the way in which it was conjectured that the young men came by their deaths, he, however, roused himself in a moment, and swore at the parson for giving credit to so unlikely a tale. Declaring that "the hay-makers were a pack of fools, and too far off to know one of his nephews from the other, adding that surely everyone must be well aware that it was Roger who swam to his brother's aid, since he was known to be out and out the best swimmer." Squire Giffard in due time without openly admitting his error, tacitly acknowledged it. When the monument he ordered was erected in Danesbury Church, it bore the following inscription to the memory of his nephews:—

Here rest in hope of a joyful rising,
Through the merits of Christ,
The Bodies of
ROGER AND RALPH GIFFARD,
Who were drowned in the River Spud,
While endeavouring to save each other.

This was how the Squire escaped from his difficulty.

When the first of September came, Captain Compton did not forget his old friend, Squire Giffard, and how he would feel the loss of his nephews keenly on such an anniversary.

Refusing all offers of better sport in other covers, the Captain wrote a note to the Squire, asking as a great favour permission to shoot over his land. When he had it, the brave, kind-hearted fellow set off for Hearts. His thoughts had been with Honoria all

the way. He had a suspicion that it was her cousin Roger whom she had preferred to him, and was quite ready to forgive her if she showed any symptoms of relenting.

Arrived at the Manor, he asked first after the ladies, but was told they saw no one at present; so the Captain heaved a great sigh which nobody overheard, and made his way into the oak-panelled parlour, where the Squire sat reading his newspaper; and, being a favourite with the old man, knew so well the way to his heart, that he easily persuaded him to come out and have a pop at the partridges.

Squire Giffard, followed by Roger's spaniel, who always ran at his heels now, went after his gun into the little den he called his study, trying to command his agitation at sight of many things he saw there belonging to his nephews, as he turned over the contents to find his shooting gloves. The drawer was overful of fly-books, fishing-tackle, and such-like; so the Squire, because he missed at once finding those things he searched for, flew into a passion directly, and turned all out on the floor. Then the spaniel came up and laid his forepaws firmly on an old glove that he knew to have been worn by Roger, and set up a dismal whine that the Squire understood in a moment, for the poor dumb brute looked into his face all the time so wistfully that no Christian soul could more plainly have asked for sympathy. So Squire Giffard took his nephew's glove tenderly from the dog, and laid it back in the drawer; then saying no word, but sighing heavily, he slung his gun over the mantelshelf again, and leaving all else in disorder, came away in haste, shutting close the door of the room, and bidding Captain Compton good-bye.

Always unreasonable in his likes and dislikes, he would never from that day see Captain Compton, who in time gave up altogether calling at Hearts, and despaired of any more being in the company of Honoria.

CHAPTER VI.

In which Squire Giffard is ordered to drink the Bath Waters.

HUNGER persuades a man quicker than aught else, and he who must labour before he and his family can eat, will rouse himself early to earn his daily bread, although the wife of his youth or the son of his old age has been newly snatched from his arms.

But oftentimes the rich, when trouble comes to them, are apt to sit idle and think about it. Having no spur to exertion, no necessity for self-command, they indulge in all the luxury of woe. They avoid all places of amusement, shun society, omit exercise, and, missing the heartful stimulants and cheerful occupations they

have been accustomed to enjoy, derive but little nourishment from their food, and obtain no refreshment from their sleep. Soon lassitude, debility, weariness of life, and ungrateful forgetfulness of its many remaining blessings, with a host of nervous complaints, are the maladies the physician is called in to remedy. If the professional man who is consulted is perfectly honest, knowing that change of scene, sunshine, and fresh air, are the medicines for a mind diseased, he will order, according to the patient's means, tastes, and mode of life, three months at a German Spa, or one at an English watering-place. But should the medical friend of the family have to keep pace with a rival whose practice is more lucrative than his own, and be over-weighted in the race by too expensive a house or too showy a carriage, seeing "an interesting case," he will ask many questions with an anxious and important air, press his ear to the region of the heart, desire that a long breath may be drawn, and then inquire whether the action occasioned any pain, and having by sundry pokes and thrusts raised an alarm not easily allayed in the mind of his patient, he will finish off the little courage remaining in his victim by drawing forth a mysterious instrument called a stethescope and applying it to his breast and shoulders. After that, absolute submission to his orders is secured for as many weeks or months as his conscience will allow him to issue them. And he knocks a constitution down or builds one up with as much indifference as a child raises or demolishes a house of cards.

Alas, that a profession eminently humane—nay, God-like in its uses—should be disgraced by even a few unworthy members! That the power of healing the sick and binding up the wounds of the broken-hearted, which the Lord of Life himself disdained not to exercise, should be abandoned in order to further selfish ends and be prostituted for the love of filthy lucre!

Nearly a year had passed, and Squire Giffard and his daughters continued neither ill nor well. They saw no company whatever, and went out seldom, excepting on Sundays to church in the deepest mourning. Through all the winter and the earlier part of the spring the Squire kept his bed until noon, and sat dozing in his arm-chair best part of the afternoon and evening. He lost his appetite, and fancied many things for his dinner that when they were cooked he found fault with, eating little of any food set before him and caring for none.

As the weather grew warmer, once or twice in a week he would order his old pony to be brought round, and, each day mounting with more difficulty, would trot leisurely over his farm overlooking his labourers. But, once out and about, he never took heed of time, and, missing his meals, was ever the worse for the

fatigue and long fasting he underwent. In short, the least thing was a burden to him, and nought gave him pleasure. He even cared no longer for a game at backgammon with the parson, and said he wished not to see him, but would sooner sit alone, although formerly to gain victory over so skilful a player made him merry all the evening afterwards.

The pretty girls who once made the house echo with their voices and laughter went about sad and silent all the day long. Hester never opened her harpsichord, nor could she have sat down to it if her life had depended on her playing one of the tunes Roger loved so dearly to listen to.

Honoria, it is true, applied herself with seeming diligence to reading and fancy-work; but, although she sat with her eyes intent on Mr. Locke's famous essay, or Mr. Pope's fine poems, she suffered her thoughts to wander from the page she was reading, and forgot the last sentence; and she would sit for hours japanning, and mark the figure on an Indian chest, without giving the slightest attention to her employment. So that, after she had varnished them over and over again, she would discover she had placed the wrong side up.

When, then, the first scent of the new-mown hay was wafted in at the windows, Hester went off in a dead faint, out of which she was not brought without much burning of feathers and the use of hartshorn and water. In the night Honoria, who had uttered no complaint in the daytime, arose out of her bed, dressed herself without awaking, and walked down to the bank of the river, where, still asleep, she was found at early morning by the mowers, with death but one footstep beyond her.

Then the surgeon, who had come daily from Danesbury as long as he could charge for his visits with a good grace, and while he found his other patients inquire as regularly after the family at Hearts as they told him the nature of their ailments, noticed that these good souls left off their sympathetic manner, nor longer said, "Yes, indeed," and "Ah, well-a-day, it isn't in flesh and blood to get over the loss of two such fine young men as the Squire's nephews;" but would remark instead—"Doctor, you should ask the Squire to take the young ladies to Bath for a change. They have been on your books a long time. Physic is a fine thing, but it won't cure the heartache. A little pleasure-taking and sight-seeing would do them all the good in the world now they have moped long enough in all season." The doctor said, in answer, he had for some time been of the same mind; but had not advised the journey, as he doubted whether the Squire could undertake it, as the cross roads were bad. However, on second thoughts, he spoke thus to Squire Giffard:

"Drinking the Bath waters would be of service to yourself, and a change of some kind is absolutely needed by your daughters. That fainting-fit of Miss Hester's was a very alarming one. A state of syncope is ever dangerous. Still more so I hold that habit of walking in her sleep into which Miss Giffard has fallen, which shows a tendency to catalepsy, and is as injurious to the performer as it is painful to the beholder."

"You're a Job's comforter, and no mistake," growled the Squire. "There's only one thing worth looking forward to in exchanging the comforts and conveniences of home, where the service is performed with the regularity of clockwork, for the miseries of a tawdry lodging-house, where the attendance is vile and the cooking worse, and that is the delight of going back again, and thanking one's stars the holiday is over."

This recompense never fell to the poor Squire's share, for he fell ill on the second day of his journey at one of the inns where they stopped, and there died in the arms of a sister, who came thither to nurse him by desire of her nieces.

It is not needful to dwell on the trouble the young ladies were left in, which was the greater for the Squire's delay in altering his will, which he left, by his unexpected demise, framed in the same way he had made it before the death of his nephews. His former instructions were, therefore, obliged to be carried out, although his lands went away to a distant kinsman, and most of his money having been spent in adding to them, the personal property, which was all that came to his daughters, was inconsiderable. Honoria and Hester were glad to accept the offer of a home for the present from their aunt, who accordingly carried them back with her to Bath, where she had just taken one of the new houses in Prince's Row.

The widow Giffard had lost her husband, some years before, in a duel at Charing Cross. She had been married to him through drawing a £10,000 prize with a lottery-ticket, of which he had made her a present. But the money went as easily as it came, in the South-sea and other losses, and she now helped her income by card-parties, held regularly at her house, which were well attended by people of the highest fashion.

When Honoria and Hester had somewhat recovered their spirits, they came into company; but although they mixed with their aunt's guests, they were too innocent to guess the profit she made by her visitors, or the large sums that changed owners nightly under her roof.

A lady of quality, whose fair hope of winning at quadrille was destroyed in an instant by a *sans-prendre-voli*, that swept the whole table, might recruit her finances at hazard, and recovered her

spirits on seeing the number of mains she held in her hand. So that the game not only paid for the candle, but in the box, placed conveniently for the usual contributions levied on guests for that purpose, the Widow Giffard often found considerable sums inserted for her own remuneration, by those whose good luck enabled them to be generous.

Honoria and Hester soon tired of the hollow frivolities of the life they were now compelled to lead, although not in an equal degree. The dissipation in which their time was all consumed had no charms whatever for Hester; but Honoria became celebrated for her beauty as soon as the season commenced, and was noticed at the Assembly Rooms as one of the handsomest and best-dressed of the young ladies who came there on subscription-nights.

CHAPTER VII.

In which Honoria changes her Condition without changing her Name.

BATH was at that time the gayest watering-place in England a position it chiefly owed to the exertions of the famous Master of the Ceremonies, "Beau Nash," who had been suffered to languish and then die in poverty and dejection three years before, at which time the corporation shewed tardy gratitude for the services Mr. Nash had rendered the city by interring him in the Abbey-church, after a procession in which the six senior aldermen supported the pall. When the choral service had ended, "the ringers rung a funeral peal of grandsire-triples, consisting of twelve hundred and sixty changes, the clappers being muffled on one side, and minute guns were fired eight-seven times, denoting that the deceased had entered into the eighty-seventh year of his age." The "King of Bath" was past caring for such matters.

Honoria and Hester liked, however, to set their aunt talking of the stately pomp in which Mr. Nash lived in his palmy days. How he went through the streets in a chariot drawn by six grey horses, with a retinue of attendants on horseback and on foot, bearing French-horns and other instruments of music—how he wore a large white cocked hat, and clothes covered with lace—how Mr. Nash had been treated with great condescension by the late Prince of Wales and the Prince of Orange, and had persuaded Mr. Alexander Pope, with whom he was on friendly terms, to write an inscription for the obelisk in Prince's Square, erected to commemorate the Royal visit. But the Widow Giffard laughed, as she added that Mr. Nash was no respecter of persons, and she told how the Duchess of Queensberry came to one of the dress-balls in an apron, and Mr. Nash obliged her to take it off, and how she had

seen him throw it to one of the servants-in-waiting behind her Grace. She thought the Beau very uncivil in having refused to grant the indulgence of a single dance after eleven o'clock, even to the Princess Amelia, to whose request he replied that "the laws of Bath where like those of Lycurgus—unalterable." The Widow Giffard said she had heard that Mr. Smollett had introduced Mr. Nash in one of his novels, as asking a young lady, before all the company in the Long Room, if she could tell him the name of Tobit's dog, and she had there been made to turn the laugh against him by saying, "Yes; his name was Nash, and an impudent dog he was." Then she wondered whether Mr. and Mrs. Smollett were getting over the loss of their only child, and recovering health and spirits during their long stay at Nice. From that, in her gossipping way, she went on to the provision Mr. Ralph Allen, the late Mayor of Bath, had just made in his will for the widow and children of Mr. Fielding, who, to be sure, had paid him a great compliment by representing him as Squire All-worthy in "Tom Jones." Then she wondered why Mr. Pope hurt Mr. Allen's feelings by that spiteful clause in his will, by which he desired to have repaid the money lent him for his own and charitable uses by Mr. Allen. The widow said she believed it was done to please his friend Miss Martha Blunt, who had declared she would take no legacy from Mr. Pope unless he cleared himself of all obligations to Mr. Allen by his will.

"She was a most arrogant woman," said the widow, "and she quarrelled with Mr. and Mrs. Allen after being asked, with Mr. Pope, to Prior Park over and over again—to please him, you may be sure, because Mr. Allen, when Mr. Pope was away at Bristol, denied her the use of his chariot to take her to mass,—as if it was to be expected that the chief magistrate of Bath would sanction Popish practices he might be ere long called upon to repress, by letting his carriage be seen at the door of a Roman Catholic chapel. However that might be, Mr. Allen gave the money Mr. Pope left him to the Bath Hospital, and said Mr. Pope was ever a bad accountant, and that if to £150 he had added another cipher he had been nearer the mark."

Then the widow laughed as she told how she had heard that Mr. Pope could not sit up till he was laced in a stiff canvas bodice, and that he was dressed, when out visiting, by one of the female servants, and was a very troublesome guest altogether, taking up more attendance than anyone else, eating more than was good for him at table, and falling asleep after it. She remembered seeing him as if it had happened yesterday, although she was a young woman at the time, and it was years and years ago. "He was dressed in black, with a tie-wig and a little sword." Then the Widow Giffard

drew her niece's attention to the Rules still hung in the Assembly Rooms, that had been determined by general consent in 1742, and, as she said, read like a paper in the *Spectator* more than anything else, and shewed the liberties Mr. Nash indulged himself in taking:—

I. That a visit of ceremony at coming to Bath, and another at going away, is all that is desired by ladies of quality and fashion—except impertinents.

II. That ladies coming to the ball appoint a time for their footmen's coming to wait on them home, to prevent disturbances and inconveniences to themselves and others.

III. That gentlemen of fashion never appearing in a morning before the ladies in gowns and caps, show breeding and respect.

IV. That no person take it ill that anyone goes to another play or breakfast and not to theirs—except captious by nature.

V. That no gentleman give his tickets for the balls to anyone but gentlewomen.—N.B.—Unless he has none of his acquaintance.

VI. That gentlemen crowding before the ladies at a ball, show ill-manners; and that none do so for the future—except such as respect nobody but themselves.

VII. That no gentleman or lady take it ill that another dances before them—except such as have no pretence to dance at all.

VIII. That the elder ladies and children be contented with a second bench at the ball as being past or not come to perfection.

IX. That the younger ladies take notice how many eyes observe them.—N.B.—This does not extend to the *have-at-alls*.

X. That all whisperers of lies and scandal be taken for their authors.

XI. That all repeaters of such lies and scandal be shunned by all company—except such as have been guilty of the same crime.—N.B.—Several men of no character, old women, and young ones of questioned reputation, are great authors of lies in this place, being of the sect called *levellers*.

Honoria shone equally in the minuets that came between the country-dances at the dress-balls on Monday, and in the cotillions that were danced one before and one after tea at the fancy-balls, held every Thursday. In the latter, during the height of the season, there were generally twelve sets, and the rival belles who appeared in them spared neither expense nor play of fancy in their desire to eclipse each other by the magnificence of their dress and the display of their fine shapes embellished in the height of the *mode*; so that no one would have imagined them the same persons who appeared in the pump-room in *déshabille* at eight in the morning, and drank the waters while the band, including "hays, tabor, and pipe," played in the gallery above, and blowzy figures bobbed about in the king's bath under the windows, arrayed in "chip hats and jackets, and petticoats of brown linen."

Hester's innocent pleasure, in setting herself off to the best advantage, had ended with Roger's life; but Honoria, when once the love of admiration had taken hold of her, spared no pains to

please, and hoped by securing a grand match to gratify her passion for dress. She wore her own hair, but elaborately curled and frizzed, and completely whitened by powder and pomade in the French fashion, and in the evening heightened her complexion by Italian paint, both red and white. She used perfumes, patches, and point-lace (although the last had a ruinous duty fixed on it before exportation, increased by a recent *arrêt* of the Council of State at Paris). And as no woman who carried "seven yards of hoop" could "convey herself into a hackney-coach or slide behind a counter," she never appeared abroad of a smaller circumference, and thus ran no danger of being mistaken for the daughter of a tradesman, contractor, factor from the East Indies, or planter from the West; and conscious of her birth and beauty, to crown all, Honoria swam with a gait that made all the women toss their heads as she passed down the Long Room, and set all the gentlemen tapping their snuff-boxes and looking after her. Twice she saw Captain Compton's name in print. The first time it was in the *Gazette*—

"Captain Robert Compton, of the 22nd Regiment, to be Colonel of a newly-raised regiment."

She sighed softly to herself, and hoped he was not likely to be sent out of the kingdom. The next time his name was among the marriages—

"Colonel Robert Compton, eldest son of the late Hugh Compton, Esq., Member for Danesbury, to Miss Charlotte Homewood, an agreeable young lady, with a fortune of £80,000."

This happened not until Honoria was herself married and had become the mother of two children. Yet I doubt whether she was altogether pleased at reading of Colonel Compton's marriage. Her own match had not been equal to her expectations, as often happens to young ladies who are talked of too much in public for their great beauty and the display they make of it. Most of the men of family, and gentlemen of the army, who sought wives during the season of Bath, were also looking out for fortunes; and those who woud have been content to marry without were not of suitable position, or had some blot on their 'scutcheons or characters, which the Widow Giffard easily uncovered with the aid of one or the other of the tabbies of good descent who frequented her home.

So, to the great joy of Thomas Giffard, the distant kinsman to whom her father's estate had so unexpectedly descended, Honoria consented to marry without changing her name, and was only too glad, after all her visions of greatness, to find herself the mistress of the house that had once been her father's, and to offer Hester a home at Hearts more congenial to her pure mind than her aunt's dwelling could afford her.

The only real happiness that Hester had known since the death of Roger she felt at the birth of her sister's first child. So it chanced, when a year afterwards a second infant was born, and Honoria's extraordinary beauty was even greater than before her marriage, her kinsman met his old friend and schoolfellow, now become Sir Robert Compton by the death of his uncle, who, having since his marriage grown more intimate than ever with the family at Hearts, offered an invitation to them all, which Thomas Giffard accepted for himself and his wife, subject to Honoria's pleasure, to spend some days at Fenwick Hall, and to be present at the forthcoming christening of Sir Rorbert's son and heir.

Hearing this, Hester prayed earnestly she might herself remain at Hearts in charge of her dear little niece and nephew. She, however, said nought more at that time, but waited some weeks, lacking courage to urge the matter that was upon her mind.

At last chance threw her alone with her sister and the boy on her knee. Hester, holding him up with her hands under his arms, and the child laughing and springing for joy in the sunshine that was streaming upon them through the casement and making her look like the virgin-mother as she bent down her head with the sweetness in her face that is bred of sorrow and love,—then the fear that lay heavy on Hester found words, and there being no one by to hear what she asked of Honoria, she prayed her, as much as she dared, not to visit Fenwick Hall, but to make some excuse to her husband, and stay quietly at home with her children, for Hester knew to her great grief that Sir Robert Compton admired her sister as much as ever he did in his life, and that the little love he had for his wife was remarked on by all who stayed in his house.

Honoria, for the third time in her life, was beside herself with rage at her sister, and terrified the gentle creature by the fury she showed. Nay, the little babe was so startled by the anger in his mother's shrill voice, that he dropped the coral he was sucking to the floor, and screamed without ceasing in an agony of terror, until his nurse was summoned with much haste to take him out of hearing, his mother stopping her ears till he was gone. Then Honoria turned upon Hester, and accused her of the basest ingratitude, saying she had stood aloof, like the selfish creature she was, from making any sacrifice of her own person and liberty, and left her sister to venture all to furnish them both with a good home.

Hester, in tears, begged that, for mercy's sake, Honoria would cease from such dreadful thoughts, crying out: "You speak wild

words that have no meaning; surely you love your husband, the father of your children, better than aught else. It was only for Lady Compton's sake, and to stop idle tales, I prayed you to keep from Fenwick Hall."

Honoria's passion mastering her prudence she replied: "You have neither truth nor courage, Hester. You know as well as I do that the woman who loved Roger Giffard living must love him dead, for there is no one like him left in the world."

"Roger?" asked Hester faintly. "Did *you* love Roger?"

"Aye, that I did, better than my own life. Rejoice evermore that you alone had possession of his heart, and keep faithful to his memory. You cannot triumph over me now. He is as much mine as yours, in the churchyard clay."

Hester wept silently with her hands before her face. Honoria glanced at her contemptuously and continued:

"Beware how you misunderstand me again, Hester, for I tell you, once for all, that I cannot love Thomas. His love for me was mad while it lasted, but it was of a kind that soon cools. He is cold and secret, and mean and cowardly. Such men win not women's love, nor care for what is best in their natures. If I tried to make him see the inmost thoughts of my mind, he would not understand them. The bondage of a slave is less galling than that of a wife who is treated like a cipher by her husband until he seeks the solace of her caresses." Honoria, to her sister's surprise, ceased to speak, and cried very bitterly.

Hester had scarcely seen her shed tears before; but it was the first time Honoria's feelings had found vent since her marriage, and they overbore all restraint; for she was by no means reconciled to the change in her condition, although too proud to make any complaint to her husband, and giving him good reason to be content with her conduct as a wife.

Honoria had greatly missed the adulation she received from her kinsman during his courtship, which ceased abruptly after her wedding-day. Although he loved her dearly, he was not a man to study to please her in trifling things, or to trouble himself by going the least out of his way to indulge her tastes or fancies. She was one ever grateful for such attentions from another as showed her wants and wishes understood: but, unhappily, also forgot not from childhood any slight ever shown her.

Now, Thomas Giffard, at the first friend's house they paid a visit to after wedlock, when talking with some ladies about an essay by Dr. Goldsmith, which was then newly-published, and in a magazine he had in his hand at the tea-table, on Honoria's asking to see it, threw it towards her so carelessly that it rolled over, and fell at her feet, and she picked it up for herself, while those of her

own sex who were near her, could not forbear tittering so see a beauty so humbled, and she for very pride showed no temper; but forgot not the slight to her dying day—while Thomas Giffard laughed, unconscious of her anger. Other and deeper reasons than such small, and by most, unconsidered trifles, had Honoria by this time to vex her. She resented the limits fixed to their expenditure, which was less than in her father's time, although their income was greater. She grudged the liberty her husband gave himself of running up to London whenever he had a mind, leaving her to look after her nursery. She felt jealous of the love he bore the friends he had made in his bachelor days, when working hard in Temple Chambers, without expectation of a fine estate falling to him so easily. When he came home with his pockets empty, save of playbills and tavern charges, she received him graciously. When he was not by, she sat in thoughtful silence, contrasting Thomas Giffard with Roger and Ralph, who were his cousins as well as hers,—their chivalric tenderness towards women and children, their pure, studious lives, and abstinence from gross sensual pleasures, their lavish generosity, and the boyish candour which made them share all their thoughts, hopes, ambitions, and aims, with Honoria and Hester.

Recalling bitterly these "precious friends hid in death's dateless night," Honoria undervalued the close, stern man, who gave her no insight into the depths of his character; and whether she was grave or gay, loving or indifferent in her behaviour, bore all the changes in her captious and capricious temper with the same unvarying constancy and patience.

So it followed that Honoria nursed her wrath until she came to regard herself as a martyr to high principles and heroic resolves, and to depreciate her husband and her master as a mean-spirited tyrant. Giving herself the greater praise all the time, and rising ever more and more in her estimation, because she had ceased altogether from her former undue extravagance in dress—had never asked to be taken to London or Bath—had left off, at her husband's request, spoiling her fine hair with powder, and her brilliant complexion with paint—had given up patches and perfumes, and only wore point-lace lappets, ruffles, and stomacher a dozen times in a year, and, what was more, had, solely to please her husband, not only ceased to appear in a hoop of the fullest dimensions, but had also for some time forborne to carry a favourite fan that he said had been well enough for town use, but being a whole yard in width, drew too many eyes upon her in a small country church, and must, therefore, be laid aside. Under these circumstances the interview Hester had had with her sister left her foreboding farther sorrow for both, through the fiery spirit and strong passions of Honoria.

And her heart was full of compassion for this kinsman, Thomas, who showed, at all times, brotherly kindness to her, and, as she thought, the deepest and truest love towards his wife. It seemed to Hester that Thomas used discretion in leaving Honoria to keep house when he saw fit to visit London, as her young children needed their mother; and her vanity and coquetry were so great, she was best out of harm's way. But for her life Hester dared not reply to Honoria; so she kept her thoughts to herself, and as she did so, wondered whether fear of Honoria might not also have somewhat to do with the reserve her sister complained of in her husband, who, being older and wiser, might be minded to have his own way in all things, and, therefore, in order to run no risk of contradiction, deemed it but prudent to avoid giving his wife the least inkling of his intentions on subjects of importance beforehand. In which Hester held him to act wisely, knowing as she did Honoria's imperious temper. Of all that Honoria had said, Hester was most hurt by the words she had used when speaking of Roger: "He is as much mine as yours, in the churchyard clay." And she could not help feeling some satisfaction in remembering that Thomas Giffard had asked her hand, and been by her told he might have a chance of winning Honoria if he tried. Upon which he had thanked Hester, and confessed that he had believed the honour beyond his hopes when he came to her, as Miss Giffard had, he knew, refused better offers.

Indeed, Sir Roger Compton had told Thomas Giffard, at the time of Honoria's rejection, in what manner his suit had been received. Now that his friend was married and Honoria his own wife, anyone must have taken unusual pains who could have made him jealous of them.

So the christening at Fenwick Hall was to bring thither, among a host of other company, Squire Giffard and his beautiful wife.

CHAPTER VIII.

Honoria is flattered, not trusted.

Honoria, walking in the garden next morning, heard the postman's horn as he went over the bridge, and directly turned her steps towards the house. Thomas Giffard, as he stood in the hall reading a letter, saw his wife cross the lawn that she might reach him sooner than by the path winding round it through the shrubberies.

"It is best to tell her nothing. I would sooner she should fancy anything than know the truth," he said, thrusting a letter hastily into his pocket, and walking back into the parlour, which

was low and long, with doors like those in a packet-cabin. "I must have my portmanteau packed at once, Honoria, and take horse for London," said her husband, looking round as she came in with a lapful of Spring-flowers, caught in the skirt of her chintz dress, and making a somewhat lavish display of her quilted petticoat, silk-stockings, and dainty high-heeled shoes.

"Is it business or pleasure this time, Thomas?" asked his wife, as she thrust a great bunch of wet lilac under his nose for him to smell its sweetness, scattering the raindrops all over his cravat as she shook the flowers in her agitation at the ill news she had just heard.

Mr. Giffard brushed the moisture from his cravat with his sleeve, in order to gain time to frame an answer that should lead his wife from the true reason of his journey without danger of his detection in deceit.

Honoria marked how closely he knit his brows, and how grave he looked; but, appearing to observe nought, she threw the flowers out of her gown on to the oak table, and catching the two ends of the red sash that fastened his morning-gown in one hand, she held up the other to command his attention:

"Remember that Bath and Beau Nash rule three," she cried, shaking her head at him. "That gentlemen of fashion never appearing in a morning before the ladies in gowns and caps show breeding and respect."

"The charm of home is that there a man can do what he likes, wear what he pleases, and say what he chooses," said Mr. Giffard.

"Upon my word, sir, you are candid if not polite. I thought *I* was the charm of *your* home, at any rate."

"That of course," said Mr. Giffard, yawning. "So you don't like my *déshabille*, Honoria. In my youth we beaux met in the coffee-houses about the Inns of Courts to breakfast together in just such morning gowns, wearing yellow, red, or green sashes, according to our fancy. Mr. Cooper, the Templar who turned poet, has taken an invalid's privilege, and has been painted in his gown and cap, in which he will be handed down to posterity. And Mr. James Thompson—but that was long ago."

"Such a dress was in character with Mr. Thompson, the lazy fellow who took fifteen years in writing a description of the 'Castle of Indolence,' at the rate, I suppose, of a stanza a month, and was seen in his friend Shenstone's garden, at the Leasowes, with his hands behind his back, biting out the sunny side of a peach he was too lazy to gather." Then, as Mr. Giffard smiled, Honoria continued persuasively: "Is it business you have to attend to, or are you going to see Garrick or Foote in a new piece?"

Mr. Giffard winced at the question as he thought of the urgent need there was for his journey, and feared to commit himself by his answer, knowing how sharp witted Honoria was. She, with a woman's quickness, divining some concealment, kept her eyes all the while fixed on him.

"Is that pretty head-gear your own invention?" asked Mr. Giffard, hoping to sweeten his wife's temper by a little flattery.

She had folded a piece of gauze or Leicester-web about her head, crossed it under her chin, and tied it behind her neck, the end falling down her back.

"Why, 'tis a Ranelagh mob-cap. You must have seen the like a hundred times. When they came up, six years ago, 'twas said the mode was copied from the market-women in Covent Garden by a lady who appeared at Ranelagh with a square of Scotch lawn folded in this manner, and what *she* wore became the rage directly. *I* wonder at her boldness!"

"I don't, knowing who 'twas—Mrs. Jane Douglas!—I was at Ranelagh myself that night," said Mr. Giffard, looking down complacently at his knee-buckles, and admiring his well-turned legs. "We, gay bachelors, mobbed that fair creature, so that she could hardly move for the crowd that followed her party. But she lived not far from Covent Garden, and was not embarrassed by her train of worshippers. The highest and purest ladies in the gardens imitated her dress. I expect the fair sex will not be any wiser a hundred years hence. Mrs. Jane Douglas was a beautiful woman, and all she wore became her. So far you are like her; you look as fresh as Aurora."

"Or a market-woman with a basket of fruit on her head," said Honoria, smiling, however, at the compliment paid her.

"Now for the fatal plunge," thought Thomas, adding: "You wished to know my errand to London, my dearest dear. Two or three of my old friends press me too kindly to visit them for me to like to send a refusal. They would have me present at the first Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture that Sir Joshua Reynolds has so earnestly forwarded. The members have no longer any need to borrow a room in the Strand from the Society of Arts, nor to rent one in Spring Gardens, but have a magnificent suite of apartments in Somerset House, allotted them by the goodness of the King. Sir Joshua is so pleased with the success he has at length had that he can talk of nothing else, greatly to Dr. Johnson's disgust, who despises the whole affair, condemns it as useless, and says, in his surly way: 'Poor Mortals! As if human life was not already too short for the fitting performance of all the necessary duties that devolve upon mankind without contrivances like these to make the time still shorter.'"

"I wonder people trouble themselves to repeat that old bear's sour speeches," cried Honoria, glad to indulge her spleen a little at the learned doctor's expense.

"I suspect," continued Thomas Giffard, "that what has put him in such an ill-humour, is his having learnt that there is no salary annexed to the Professorship of Ancient Lirerature, which has been given him. Dr. Goldsmith is appointed Professor of Ancient History, and has only said, with his usual goodness of heart: 'It is but a barren honour, like ruffles to a man who wants a shirt.'"

"I wonder you care to see modern paintings," said Honoria, scornfully; "I could not hang one on our walls unless it was a portrait."

"Not one of Gainsborough's or Wilson's landscapes?" asked her husband.

"I think they are over-bold to leave portrait-painting."

Thomas Giffard refreshed himself by a pinch of Spanish from his amber snuff-box before he defended the new school of painting, that was just rising in England, against his wife's ill-natured attack.

"The young American, Mr. Benjamin West, the artist the King favours so greatly by his patronage, is setting a new style before the public. All the world talks of him. It is surprising he should have acquired a love of art bred among Quakers, and practised it with colours given him by savages. He exhibits the picture his Majesty has ordered. The subject is 'Regulus'—I am told it is amazingly fine. But his grandest picture is yet on the easel; 'tis the 'Death of Wolfe in the Moment of Victory.' Sir Robert Compton tells me it is beyond all praise; but what delights him most—having been present at Quebec and sharing in the glory—is the exactness of the portraits, which, even to the clothes, are true in every detail. Hitherto, not only in England, but in Italy and France, it has been the custom to equip a general in the garb of a Greek or Roman warrior, and arm him with the weapons of the ancients. Here the English general wears his own uniform and sword, and the interest is a thousand times greater than where contemporary scenes are falsely represented. The absurdity of such treatment is apparent as soon as it is pointed out; but Sir Joshua was slow to approve of the innovation at first. Now he admires the originality of Mr. West as much as he formerly censured it; and says the picture will not only become popular, but effect a revolution in art."

"You spoke of Sir Robert Compton," said Honoria, pulling an anemone to pieces; "will he be present at the opening of the Academy?"

"No; he had only just returned from London when I saw him last. He had been in all the artists' studios, and I have been but repeating his account of them. Gainsborough and Wilson both exhibit: and our best sculptor, Bacon, sends his 'Lord Chatham.' I don't think Sir Robert goes to London till after the christening, when he intends to take his wife to their town house in Pall Mall. Talking of the christening, by the way, reminds me that I must get some new clothes before our visit to Fenwick Hall; and I shall be happy to execute any little commission of yours, my dear. What can I bring for you from London, Honoria—you have only to ask and have."

Mr. Giffard ended with this offer out of politeness only; but Honoria seized it eagerly, exclaiming—

"I want everything you can name. I must have new gowns, new caps, new laces, new shoes, and new buckles to put on them. Everything I had for my marriage is now old-fashioned. All my *sacs* and *negligées* require altering. I must have both flowered silks and taffeties, for the weather is always uncertain in the spring. It may be warm; but if it continues cold, it will be as well to be prepared for it. To tell you the truth, I should like to go to London with you."

"I am sorry you can't, my love," said Mr. Giffard shortly, and there the conversation ended.

Honoria scorned to say another word, and left the room to turn over the dresses in her wardrobe, and decide on what was needed for her visit.

Thomas sighed as he drew out his letter and read it again. Some years before a sister of his had married a goldsmith on Ludgate-hill, who was believed at that time to be a very wealthy man, but, having the credit of great riches, fell easily into debt, and spent more than he had, till ruin came and none would trust him longer. Being more anxious for his own gain than honest towards his creditors, he was discovered to have concealed his effects after a Statute of Bankruptcy had been taken out against him, and was executed at Smithfield shortly afterwards.

There was little mercy then shown towards rogues, but many living now in comfort—nay, affluence—can testify to the present clemency of the law.

Mr. Giffard employed the goldsmith's brother, Mr. Samuel Price, as his broker, although many acquainted with the character he bore on 'change, advised the removal of his business, and he objected that because one man was a rogue it was hard a whole family should suffer suspicion. But in January Mr. Giffard was alarmed by hearing that application had been made by the Deputy-Governor of the Bank of England, and by the Director of

the South Sea House to the Secretary of State, for passports and other assistance to follow and secure Mr. Samuel Price, who had fraudulently received and carried off £70,000 of the said Company's and from other offices.

On the evening of Mr. Price's embarkation, his wife had been seized, on her return from Harwich, with sixty-four bank notes and several India bonds on her person.

A reward of 200 ducats, with an advertisement and description of Mr. Price, was inserted in the Amsterdam and French papers, and he was apprehended and brought to England to take his trial at the Old Bailey, where Mr. Giffard had been bound over to appear as a witness for the prosecution under pain of imprisonment.

As Honoria had always advised her husband to remove his business from Mr. Samuel Price, Thomas Giffard feared to tell her the truth, and also desired to spare her from any share in his own deep anxiety.

So the evil his reserve had worked deepened from this day. Going forth to London without lightening his care by her counsel, Thomas Giffard rode from his own door, and Honoria held up the boy for a parting kiss after he was in the saddle.

When she had watched man and horse, and waved her hand in answer to the last backward glance her husband threw on her and his children before the bend in the road hid him from their view, she went up to that window in the house from which she could see him longest; and when he had passed out of her sight her heart sank, as it ever did in his absence, with fear of unknown ills chancing to either before they met again.

As she went in from the porch, Honoria felt full of remorse for the words she had used to her sister the evening before. "Mine is a bitter, bad temper, to prompt me to say such things only to spite Hester in return for her impertinence. All the while I am conscious that I love Thomas more than he loves me. The difference is in our dispositions. It is not in his power to care more about any woman than he does about me. 'Tis not in him to love as I could. He is kind to his wife for the same reason that he is to his horses and dogs. But he has no higher need for her than for his daily food. Why else does he treat me as a child, with smiles and caresses, and withholding of all serious talk? I know that his heart is even now heavy with care, but he trusts me with none of his affairs. He has no taste for painting—'tis but a pretence; I know that well enough. He let me know that he talked parrot-like, repeating only Sir Robert Compton's words. Yet he would have me believe he has no more urgent call to London than the invitation of his friends to the opening of the Royal Academy!

What a simpleton he must think me! His talk of his bachelor days came from his heart; he said naught else that was genuine. I despise jealously, yet 'tis hard to put faith in a husband who hides his thoughts. Who was Mrs. Jane Douglas, and why did he laugh as he spoke of her? 'Tis very aggravating to know so little about one's own husband. Then, he cut me short at once when I said I wished to go to London."

CIVILISATION.

By the wide sea—
Weary with waiting—watching human woe,
As the dark tide of centuries ebb and flow
In giant waves that sink so far below;
Oh, sad, sweet eyes, so yearningly aglow!
Heavy with mem'ries of the abyssmal past,
Ten thousand years!
A world's iconoclast!
Freighted with trophies from each varied clime,
Daughter of all earth's wrongs and all her hopes sublime.
A myriad years! of thought, of love, of strife,
Dwarfing the war of elements! The life
Of death incorporates in thee,
Bowed head, on which so great a burden lies—
Heart, that has throbbed unstayed since Paradise;
Soul of all souls! The ends of earth have come
And made thy utterance mighty! Voiceless, dumb,
We stand amazed before the embodied thought
Of one like thee, by all earth's suffering wrought.

ISABEL A. SAXON.

PERSONALITIES OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

XXVIII.

MR. SMOLLETT.

THIS gentleman, we believe, proudly "claims kindred" with the celebrated novelist, his namesake; and equally, we believe, 'has his claims allowed." Those who have watched his bearing in the House of Commons will readily admit that there is something about him remarkably suggestive of the blood of the author of "Roderick Random," and "Peregrine Pickle," flowing in his veins. There are glints of the same broad humour, and amusing developments of the same blunt and half-querulous independence. It is strange that the hon. gentleman's ancestor, while continually subscribing contributions towards "the harmless gaiety of nations," should have been almost all his life a martyr to ill-health in some form or another. Sterne used to satirise him under the highly complimentary designation of "Smelfungus," and jeered at his peevish references to his sufferings. One would almost suppose that the present representative of the name inherited some slight elements of the same temperament. When Mr. Smollett gets on his legs in the House, he usually gives one the idea of a man who is suffering from a fit of dyspepsia, and who is bound to vent his irritability with impartial justice on friends and foes alike. He scolds all round with a quaint humorous crustiness which, in place of provoking the indignation and resentment of his audience, causes everybody to turn in the direction of the speaker, and to greet his plain-spoken and caustic fault-finding with peals of laughter. The truth is, the House does not believe one bit in the reality of the hon. gentleman's fury, though he himself, to judge by his affronted air and the crisp tone of indignation in which he deals out his dry and droll sarcasms, appears to have worked himself up into the belief that he is in a most terrible rage. The angrier he seems to get the merrier and more delighted gets the House; for well does it know that just in proportion as the hon. member lashes himself nto greater fury, the more plentiful will be those piquant gibes and flouts, expressed in racy Scotch idiom, which so tickle and exhilarate it. The member for Cambridge has, we believe, passed a great part of his life in India, and he frequently selects that empire as the text of his quaint denunciations. Apart from the peculiar style of his animadversions, his speeches display no contemptible know-

ledge of his theme, and his remarks are often unquestionably shrewd and suggestive,—the offspring evidently of actual personal experience. In this respect they present a charming contrast to the purblind and pedantic howlings of a Fawcett on the same subject. It is amusing to watch the crusty old Scotchman rise from the back Conservative benches on an Indian Budget night, to pound into the Under-Secretary and the Government. The House, empty as it generally is on the night of the Indian financial statement, has been rendered almost literally tenantless by the howlings of the learned Professor just alluded to, who for a full hour has been forcibly suggesting a discontented watch-dog baying the moon. But a whisper that the descendant of the great Tobias is on his legs brings many a straggler in from the lobbies. The member for Cambridge grasps in his hand a formidable bundle of notes, and at once gets astride of his favourite hobby—the irrigation of India. He peppers away at the Government for three-quarters of an hour in a succession of terse, snarling sentences, every second one of which is so saturated with his own characteristic humour that the House at once begins to relish the entertainment. The hon. gentleman keeps his eye steadily fixed on Lord George Hamilton (late Under-Secretary), who as steadily eyes him back, and probably laughs at regular intervals. He tells his lordship how, years ago, he (Mr. Smollett) pointed out that a timely course of irrigation would have prevented these famines, "which occur as regularly as a hen lays her eggs." "But," he adds, snapping his fingers, "there are always some persons (viz., the Government) who think they can see deeper into a milestone than other people." When the hon. gentleman sits down the House cheers him heartily, though it no more believes in his fierce looks and growling inuendoes than does a mischievous urchin in the scoldings of his grandfather, whom he knows is laughing in his sleeve all the time. It is probable that Mr. Smollett felt his temper sorely tried (and, perhaps, his purse too) by Mr. Gladstone's sudden dissolution of Parliament in 1873; at any rate, he was the only member who formally arraigned the right hon. gentleman for that extraordinary proceeding. Really, the ex-Premier seemed stung to the quick by the uncompromising home-thrusts of Tobias Smollett's descendant, for he sprung to his feet in the very whirlwind of passiou. He replied by telling the hon. gentleman that he scarcely maintained the reputation of his famous ancestor, which was a very small piece of retaliation—especially as nobody agreed with it. Then, in awful tones of outraged innocence, he defied his assailant to prove some trivial allegation; to which Mr. Smollett replied by stating that he had no notion if rising in his place a second time. Whereupon Mr. Gladstone, who is rather fond of insinuating that he monopolises all the man-

liness of the House, hurled forth the fearful taunt that the member for Cambridge had not the manliness to prove his own assertions. No repartee could be more essentially feeble or more childish. The member for Cambridge is a favourite with the House no less for his shaggy Scotch honesty and downrightness than for his queer saturnine humour. He not only proves his affinity to the famous novelist in these respects, but like him also, behind the mere laughter-moving faculty there may lurk, for aught we know, some touches of true poetic feeling; for poet, in the genuine sense of the word, the man undoubtedly was who wrote the tender ode, beginning, "Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn!" and who penned lines of such masculine poetic vigour as—

"Thy spirit, Independence, let me share,
Lord of the lion-heart and eagle-eye!"

XXIX.

MR. TREVELYAN.

THE present House of Commons probably contains as many distinctive types of human character as is possible in an assembly which, though large, is still necessarily limited in numbers. One type of character with whom we have all possibly had the misfortune to come in contact at one period or other of our lives, is the prig. Wordsworth very truly declares that "the child is father of the man;" and no doubt, could we trace the careers of the prigs with whom we associated in our school-boy days, we should continually be confirming the wisdom of that dictum. We should find that the prig of our form or our college, when he became a soldier or a parson, or a doctor or an M.P., did not, by any means, part with his essential attribute; that he was merely a "child of a larger growth;" that, having been a child-prig, he had merely developed into a man-prig. The two commonest specimens of this strange species are undoubtedly the intellectual and the moral. The intellectual prig is given to laying down the law upon all questions relating to letters, science, and politics; and his claim to do so is probably based upon the fact that he has taken prizes at school and honours at college. The moral prig usually steers his course by the light of a few narrow moral maxims which he has got by rote; and he occupies a great deal of his time in censuring those who do not follow in his wake. Sometimes the two classes are combined, as appears to be the case with Mr. Trevelyan. He is not, by any means, the only Parliamentary prig at present extant, but it cannot for a moment be denied that he is one of the most, if not the most representative specimen of the genius. Mr. Trevelyan went to college and entered public life with all the advantages

which could be derived from the immense prestige and literary reputation of his illustrious uncle. No one can be more sensible of the vast abilities of Lord Macaulay and of the peculiar beauties of his style than we are; yet it is impossible to read the nephew's "Life" of the uncle without becoming aware of the source from which Mr. Trevelyan derives his tendency to priggishness. In spite of Macaulay's marvellous memory, and ready conversational powers, the smell of the prig is perceptible in every page. Many of the letters are saturated with self-consciousness, and a consequential egotism; the writer is always implying, and indeed sometimes saying, that he could have done this thing and that thing much better himself. If it be true that Sidney Smith called Lord Macaulay "a book in breeches," we scarcely wonder at the priggishness; for it is obvious that it must be next to impossible for any human book, whether in breeches or in petticoats, to keep perfectly free from the vice. When Mr. Trevelyan was at college he felt very likely quite conscious of his great superiority in being so closely connected with a great luminary of the nineteenth century. If he was not the rose, at least he was nearer to it than anybody else. Anyhow, he spouted loudly at the Union; scribbled *vers de societé* and rhyming *jeux d'esprit;* and, in short, did everything to make a mysterious reputation, and to create a general impression that he was the "coming man." In Mr. Trevelyan's case, however, the "coming man" seems never exactly to have come. After leaving Cambridge, he entered the Indian Civil Service, and, from his post in the East, contributed a series of papers to "Macmillan's Magazine," called "The Competition Wallah." No one will deny that Mr. Trevelyan possesses a kind of academic cleverness, and these papers of his were certainly considered able; at the same, time the characteristic vice peeped out among the leaves very unmistakably, and his lucubrations, as a whole, like his public speeches, savoured too much of "the inspired schoolboy." Then came his House of Commons career, which still continues. When Mr. Gladstone came into power, in 1868, he made Mr. Trevelyan a Junior Lord of the Treasury, but shortly afterwards "The Competition Wallah" fell to denouncing the Duke of Cambridge and the Horse Guards in a very priggish manner, and immediately received a hint that that kind of thing would not do at all, and that he had better resign. Since that period the member for the Border Boroughs has taken the question of the County Franchise under his particular wing; and Session after Session sees him rise in his place to declaim, in an elaborate speech, brimming over with priggishness, and artificially delivered, on the tiresome and threadbare subject. His voice is thin and harsh, and his debating-club oratory without a single charm; and

so, although the painfully-measured periods are produced by the nephew of Lord Macaulay, they fall upon attenuated and somnolent benches. But it is in his speeches to his not over-enlightened Scotch constituents that Mr. Trevelyan shows himself at the zenith of his priggishness. He actually told them, last Spring, that the Government were not averse to war, because the Ministers could find places for their sons, who were such dunces that they were fit for almost nothing! Could the intrinsic prig show more conspicuously than here? The infinite self-conceit! The sublime air of conscious superiority! At the same time, like most opinions of priggism, how contemptibly silly! Why should sons of Ministers especially be dunces? Perhaps Mr. Trevelyan never heard of a famous Minister called Chatham, who begot an equally famous son called Pitt? Or of a political Elijah named Henry Fox, whose mantle descended on a political Elisha called Charles James Fox? Why, according to Mr. Trevelyan's law of things, he should himself be a dunce—for was not his father, Sir Charles, a minister at Madras, and recalled for making a bungle of finance? But the hon. gentleman seems cursed with moral priggism, in addition to intellectual. Not very long ago, it was found that Lord Henry Lennox, then First Commissioner of Works, had some connection with some company that had proved unfortunate. Lord Henry's high character and House of Commons career was sufficient, with most people, to neutralise the suspicion of anything dishonourable; but Mr. Trevelyan, in his lofty integrity, considered that one of her Majesty's Ministers should be, even more than Cæsar's wife, "above suspicion;" so he went sniffing about, with his highly moral nose, and ferreting here, and ferreting there, until he at length brought the matter before the House. Lord Henry resigned, amid the sympathy of the whole House; and Mr. Trevelyan said his say amid its indignant murmurs. It is needless to state that such a personality must be anything but popular with the House of Commons. We all know how the prig is generally regarded at school. His assumption of moral superiority is resented as an impertinence; and he is usually suspected of being a sneak and a tale-bearer. And these instincts are active at every period of life, and under all circumstances. From the very nature of the case, it is impossible that the prig can ever become a great man. How can a mind, essentially small, and "of the earth, earthy," ever rise to those noble conceptions, and become impregnated with that divine afflatus, which can alone give it a title to a seat among the Gods? For this reason, if for no other, none of its well-wishers would sigh very deeply if the House of Commons, during the next general election, were to be purged of prigs, of whom one or two specimens still remain to engage our attention.

MOTLEY.

TALES FROM THE DRAMATISTS.

By ALFRED HENRY BROMILOW.

No. VIII.

"ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM."

THE fable of this tragedy is recorded by Hollinshed in his "Chronicle," and by Jacob in his "History of Feversham." In 1592, a play upon the same subject was published, and was, in 1770, reprinted by Edward Jacob, who, in a preface, was absurd enough to impute the composition to Shakespeare. George Lillo got hold of this publication and built upon it the drama from which this tale is taken. Mr. Lillo was also the author of other dramatic compositions, such as the "Fatal Curiosity," which is superior to "Arden of Feversham." In 1790, Mr. Holman produced this tragedy for his benefit.

ARDEN had not long been married to Alicia, and they lived together at Feversham, in Kent. But, though Alicia was fair, she was false, and had contracted a strange connection with a man named Mosby, whom, indeed, she had known before her marriage; and with whom, since that event, her husband had had many disputes about some Abbey lands.

This Mosby frequented Arden's house, though the entrance to it had been forbidden him. Arden, though previously not unconscious of Alicia's conduct, had pardoned the offence; till at last he was roused to the detestation of her, by hearing her, while she slumbered, utter the name of his arch-enemy. Arden could sleep no more. He rose from his couch, went into his garden and pondered over his wrongs. It was very early in the morning, and very cold, but rest and sleep were henceforth to be unknown joys to Arden.

Whilst engaged in his meditations his wife approached him, and chided him with leaving her. Upon hearing her speak of affection and love, the injured husband's rage mounted high; he taxed her with infidelity to her vows; and she, discovering that her wickedness was no longer unknown, first defended herself, and then partly admitted her wantonness. Forgiving, as was Arden's nature, and doating as he did on Alicia's charms, it did not require her often to promise never more to look on Mosby's face, before being taken to the arms of an over-fond husband.

But the very morning she made this oath to her husband, Mosby, by his cunning, repaired to her parlour, and prepared to announce plans by which Alicia and he could avert the dangers by

which they were threatened. Her danger, that of being at any moment thrust forth from the house, with the brand of strumpet on her forehead; his danger, that of being liable to apprehension by the officers of the law.

He came, in fact, to propose to her the assassination of Arden. The project filled her with dismay; but the base coward drew such a picture of their future position, and how easily they might make themselves free, that the young woman, partly through fear on the one hand, and partly through a lingering fondness she had for Mosby on the other, tacitly consented to the scheme propounded.

But further conversation was hindered by the entrance of Arden and Franklin. Upon perceiving them, Alicia uttered a wild ejaculation, and fled from the chamber. With the coolness that invariably stamps the calculating villain, Mosby stood his ground, and asked how the Abbey lands fared. Franklin replied that so far as the lands were concerned the king had assigned them to Arden. The latter, fired by Mosby's insolence, challenged him to fight; the seducer, however, would not do so, remarking that, forsooth, the swordsman had chosen a nice field for combat—his own house. The altercation might have ended fatally but for Franklin, who calmed Arden, and it was arranged to fight in a more fit stop.

The assignment of the Abbey lands to Arden, made him another enemy in the person of one Green, who had expected them. It was not unnatural, under the circumstances, for Mosby to go to Green, and finding him apt, agree with him to murder their common enemy.

The murder was planned, and no other than Alicia was told off to carry out the vile purpose. As the schemers, Mosby and Green, were in the lane, holding close converse, there came upon them Bradshaw, who had once been a soldier, and who had with him two comrades, whom he had just met—both of them of desperate appearance and character. As Bradshaw hurried home, Mosby gave Green a note to take to Alicia, telling her to strike home, or not attempt the deed, as they had assistance at hand. Money was all the cut-throats desired; and having been assured that neither gold nor the means of escape should be wanting, the vagabonds entered into the vile conspiracy. Pending orders from Mosby, they were to stay at the inn.

Alicia required no encouragement or assistance: she had taken upon herself the responsibility of the assassination, and so, dagger in hand, she entered the lone and silent chamber where her husband was sleeping. She drew nearer to the couch to strike the fatal blow, when the fair smile on her husband's countenance for the moment distracted her from her purpose. Why had her parents forced her to give her hand to a man for whom she entertained no

love? Why had they been so unrelenting? Why had they not allowed her to marry Mosby? Then, the hunger of her soul had been stilled; her crimes, and those yet to be accomplished, would have been avoided! But there was no time for argument; the hour, the room, the silence, the privacy—all were in her favour! To it, then, without delay. Again she drew nearer, the blade was upraised, and Arden awakened! The glittering steel fell to the ground; and the confused husband, who had slumbered uneasily, rose. Did he wake or dream?

She concealed the dreadful weapon, and turned towards him. He motioned her off; told her to go forth for ever from his house—and yet, his heart melted when he saw her prostrate on her knees at his feet; his tears fell thickly when he heard her broken voice, repentant and miserable. He loved her; but for all that, the honesty and integrity of his bosom should not be softened—rather would he leave her.

Though the assassins were aware that Arden had left the house, they failed to intercept him on the road; and he escaped from their treachery. But this frustration rather enraged than calmed their passions; and having come upon Arden's servant, Michael, they made him, on point of death in case he refused, and with the promise of Mosby's sister, with whom he was in love, in case he should comply, swear to leave the doors of his master's house open that night.

As for Mosby himself, he had already entered Arden's house, and was in deep conversation with Alicia, who, ignorant of other schemes of murder, had relented of her wickedness and promise. She related her failure, and begged of Mosby to think no more of the ugly business; let him leave her, she might yet be happy with Arden—at least, she would strive to be. But Mosby was not so easily persuaded to throw away his chances of success. He would not dash all his hopes for Alicia's hand and Arden's fortune to the ground. He recounted to her the hours they had spent together, and the fond embraces they had indulged in. However, to soothe her, and to make some show of being a better man than he was, Mosby would ask her no more to gratify his passion, until she should become his bride.

In another room Franklin and Arden were already preparing for bed. Franklin told the old man that it would be better for him, it would save his honour and conscience, it would keep his house quiet from the rude gaze of the populace, if he would, after Alicia's promise to be virtuous, take her again under his protection.

Thus they talked till the clock struck ten, when they called upon Michael to bring their candles, and then, having taken leave of each other, they retired to their separate apartments.

Remorse had seized upon the wily Michael; already could he hear the footsteps of the assassins, and, calling aloud for help, he brought Arden and Franklin back. He had had a dream that thieves were in the house. Arden remarked that it was a strange thing for a waking man to dream; and, if the doors were all fast, there need be no alarm about thieves. He went to see if the doors were fast, and found them open; whereupon he admonished his servant for negligence, and again returned to his couch.

At the inn the four conspirators were planning new schemes; and Mosby, knowing that Alicia regretted the part she had thus far taken in the matter, and that she had resolved to be united again to her husband, was more enraged and determined than ever. This was now his plan. The night was too far worn to proceed to his house; they will wait until Arden stirred abroad, the two soldiers should then jostle against him, pick a quarrel, and assault him; whilst he, Mosby, would come to his rescue, by which means he would gain Arden's good-will.

As for Alicia, she had spent her late hours in wild lamentation, and in seeking and making herself worthy of Arden's love. He, knowing his weak nature, would not see the penitent, lest he should play the part of a lover rather than that of the man of honour. But a meeting did take place between them; and the tears, the sighs, and the prayers of the truly miserable Alicia, were not unavailing. Arden listened to her vows of fidelity, to her sobs for past transgressions; he took her to his arms, and bade her be happy, as he was now, and as he ever should be, so long as she remained true to his trust. Their reconciliation should be celebrated by a supper, for it was St. Valentine's day; he would go at once and call up the guests.

As Arden was passing along the road, with the intention of inviting his friends, he was jostled by the two soldiers, and insulted by them. In a moment swords were drawn. Arden was already getting the worst of the encounter, when Mosby, as pre-arranged, rushed to his rescue, and put the cowards to flight. He did not do so, however, without seeming to suffer for his bravery,—he was wounded.

This act of generosity, from one whom Arden had least to expect it, gave rise to many thanks, and the soliciting of Mosby's company at supper. The invitation was, of course, promptly accepted. His plan having succeeded, the villain hied him to his associates; he told them to go to Arden's house, and hide themselves in the cupboards; he would entice the husband from the festival, to a game of draughts. Upon uttering the words, "I take you now," the desperadoes were to spring from their hiding-places, strangle their victim, and throw the corpse over the Abbey wall.

When the evening came, Mosby, as arranged, got his hirelings into their nooks, and at length persuaded Arden to leave the festival to play draughts.

The unsuspecting husband fell into the desperadoe's snare; the words, "I take you" were at length pronounced; the murderers, as one man, leapt from the cupboards, and, with the assistance of the fierce Mosby, speedily despatched their victim.

The supper guests at length grew anxious about Arden's absence; and scarcely had the corpse been thrown over the Abbey wall, when the Mayor of Feversham and a number of armed men made their entrance into the banquetting-room.

They were in pursuit of the two scoundrels, who, they were told, had taken refuge in Arden's house. But the surprise, amazement, and confusion attending this visit was increased a thousandfold when Franklin called upon the Mayor to arrest each and all beneath the roof, as Arden—honest Arden—had been murdered, and his mutilated corpse just found.

Upon Mosby was found his victim's ring, and upon Alicia, the notes she had received from the deceiver. All within that dreadful abode were seized, several of them were guilty to some degree, and each of them were led off to justice. Thus the lust of Mosby led him on to a fearful end; and though Alicia before her arrest had repented of her crimes, the evidence was, indeed, strong enough to inculpate her. So it is proved that:

> "Virtue is arbitrary, nor admits debate,
> To doubt is treason in her rigid court;
> And if ye parley with the foe you're lost."

AN UNFAIR EXCHANGE.

You told me once that you loved me—
I believed, and I loved you too;
So you took my heart, and you gave me yours,
Which you vowed was sound and true.

I placed your heart in my bosom,
And wore it—not many days—
When I found how worthless the gift was
I had heard you so loudly praise.

For the heart you swore was a sound one,
Was so battered there would not stay
One drop of your love within it,
But trickled and fell away.

And my poor heart, you retained it,
With the love it still holds for you;
And as time took some of its sweetness,
That love all the stronger grew.

It grew and still grows the stronger,
As day follows after day;
But that heart and that love, alas! you have
No power to cast away.

And though I would fain reclaim them,
That can never, never be;
For my gift was a gift for ever,
And returns no more to me.

W. T. G.

LEAVES FROM LIFE.

BY LAUNCELOT CROSS.

A GARDEN AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

"What more felicitie can fall to creature
Than to enjoy delight with libertie,
And to be lord of all the works of Nature?"

SPENSER.

IT is our purpose in the following leaves to set forth as simply and clearly as possible the principal influences and minds that have tended to mould the character and tastes of one who has to give the greatest part of his active existence to business duties. His position is that of the largest portion of our race,—his daily bread depends upon his daily exertion; so that, whilst our narrative may be full of imperfections, it must, at any rate, have some interest for the majority of our fellows who deem it an obligation, or find it a pleasure, to employ and develop the mind. From the humblest we may get some hint that shall brighten our life, encourage us under trials, or indicate means for quickening and keeping pure the divine spark within us.

We live in a northern region. Our diurnal pursuits are in a densely populated town, the second port of the kingdom, proud of its shipping, coal, iron, and deep-throated wit. In a usual way we leave our office about five o'clock in the afternoon, and take the railway for a couple of miles out of town. From the station at which we descend we can behold our blue-slated home a quarter of a mile off, standing with its neighbour by the roadside. The house has a Quaker-like demureness and simplicity about it; yet often it strikes us—but more especially when we walk from town on a fine evening, and, emerging from the suburb of Byker Hill, behold, down a straight, hedged lane, its quietude at half-a-mile distance—then, it strikes us as a new object, islanded in green fields; and the new thought is pregnant with ten years' gratefulness (if that word may be used to express the uplifting and subjection of the heart to the Great Creative Spirit), and we feel that it has been like the fleece of Gideon—the dew of the Lord has been on it, when all around has been dry; and we pray that our mind be not changed should the day come when it shall be dry, whilst all around is heavy with blessings.

Proceeding home by rail, our road from the station is for some three or four hundred yards due south, leads then round a farm-

stead to the right, and thence to the south, again, for a couple of hundred yards, when we reach the yard-gate. Thirty yards more, by a straggling hawthorn-hedge, and we come to our garden-gate. Standing there—let us suppose it an April evening—we see rising broad and thin the smoke of the town we have left, and which is concealed by the elevated ground of Byker Hill. To the south, there is a long waving line of ebon wreaths climbing the sky. These define the course of our great commercial river. Its point nearest to us is about a mile and a half distant. It is hidden from us until in the east it forms the Long Reach, which over the open ground is beheld three miles off, shining like a shield of steel. The town sends up its vapours silently; but the noise of the manufactories and ship-yards comes at times in soft intermittent waves upon the ear. To east and west, and north and south, fields of pasture and under-cultivation lie round our home—cutting us off from the darkness of destruction, and the mysterious interchanging, creating, absorbing, evolving powers of commerce. Heaven spreads a carpet of green between the home of ours and the agencies of labour and centralisation, and the smoke of whose torment we behold going up for ever.

We enter the gate of the garden. Man, although cast out of Paradise for the sin which works like venom in all our natures, has not lost all the goodness he had when there; and the humblest garden hath much of Eden in it. Nay, the garden never did fall; and all Eden is in a garden, if we had but spiritual eyes to see. When, therefore, we enter within our garden-gate, we know of a truth that we possess as much of Eden as our souls can drink through our eyes. Thus is it with every month of every year.

Ours is one of the smallest of gardens. The gate opens halfway down the east side; the path goes direct to the centre, then proceeds, on the right, to the house porch, and, on the left, round a circular mount of stone, and moss, and periwinkle; thence, between two Siberian crab trees, the glory of spring time, it reaches a small summer-seat, overhung by a weeping ash, and backed by willows. At the gate is a small linden and an elder bush; along this side a laburnum, some variegated elders, lilacs, and more willows; whilst at our library window a horse-chestnut puts forth its leaves. On the west side we have a dense hedge of lilac bushes, and, midway in their line, an alder. Rosebushes are scattered about; some heaths, too, of which we are very proud, because of their rarity in gardens hereabouts. And, as though to chastise such imperious feelings, and to give a shade of solemnity to the garden, there are two Irish yews mournfully confronting each other over the mid-walk.

Such is the garden and its chief features. We do do not wish

to laud it; although, indeed, man cannot o'er-praise the smallest weed that grows by the wayside. It is but a cottage-garden. Compared with others, it is scarcely worth a stranger's notice; although passers-by are caught and beguiled by it in spring-time, and loiter at the gate as though they got some blessing from it. It is, nevertheless, but a cottage-garden. Such as it is—this garden of Eden—what is it to us? More than it is to others? It may be so. Shakspeare, we think, saw more in that homely plot appertaining to Anne Hathaway's cottage, and on his path through the fields thither, when he went a-courting, than has there met any eye since. And it may be we may have had some such ecstasy of feeling—the feeling in kind, not in degree, by any means—that comes from the leaves we have housed here. However that may be, one part of our answer to the question is, that the garden is to us an initial of the Universe. It has messages for us night and day. It is a chapel in which the service of the Most High ceases not in any season; and none the more awful and impressive are the outcomings and incomings that the high priest therein is one pure and mystical—even he who has announced the New Jerusalem come down from heaven. In this garden our spirit keeps everlasting Sabbath. Here we find God walks, not in the evening only, but at all times, when our spirit can seek Him. The other half of our answer consists in this: When we are in the small summer-seat in spring-time, we might be fifty miles from town and trade, so embosomed are we in the green of the ash, the willow, and the lush-lilac bushes; so bright, and plenteous, and laughing are the homely flowers in front of us; so distinctly and unimpeded comes the note of the lark overhead; but for that ray of divine sound, so sacredly still is all else usually within our retreat.

Ours is a northern and a hard clime. Sycamore, linden, chestnut, alder, and laburnum soon have their leaves eaten by the venial vapours of the district. But in the springtime these, our trees are luxuriant and fair to look upon. Our garden at this period gives no sign of blight or backwardness. When the spirit of nature now goes forth on new enterprise, here are its billowy breathings as distinct as in any other spot on earth; here are its most thrilling impulses in the dark earth it is heaving; it is streaming forth, manifesting itself, making itself a home in bud, and leaf, and flower. And the soul of man responds—nay, is stirred by some energy. His spirit, too, goes forth—it sails through the fresh seas of love that are swelling round it—it fearlessly, joyously passes over the oceans of bliss to seek new continents of truth and beauty.

This humble garden hath a more humble owner. Unworthy to behold the light of any of God's mornings, or to know aught of

beauty—no, not even in the measure of a dew-drop—to us this humble garden is an infinite boon. So far from repining at its limited space, we find here more than we can understand, even after the manner of science. Great is our ignorance. To many of the forms which here delight us we cannot give a name, and never shall. This lore, many say, is properly left with the gardener, who makes it his business and is paid for it; so does a man of wealth pay a librarian, and look to that informed head for a knowledge of his own books. But we sometimes have a craving for the gardener's craft. Nevertheless, this lack of information does not leave us in darkness. The speech of God is syllabled to us by leaf and blossom. And if a great deal of it is beyond our labour-dulled comprehension, it is not so with it all. Mountains have a language for us, although we know neither classification nor their individual names. So have the stars. We know of each something—a little—nothing. Great is our ignorance. But greater is our hope and our desire. If, looking on a flower, and it seems as if then beheld for the first time, and conveys a new truth (and no year lacks that influx), if thus much we nor saw nor guessed before—what fields lie beyond for thee, O soul! And if thou didst not deem thyself capable to grasp, to keep, so much as now thou hast, what powers may there not lie in thee, O soul, to be developed! Thou hast mystery around, and that mystery of ignorance shows how great a mystery thou art to thyself. That beneficent ignorance of our flowers keeps for us many a deep and a heaven-reaching lesson.

In something more we commend this ignorance to ourselves "The boy had juster views," says Emerson, "when he gazed at the shells on the beach, or the flowers in the meadows, unable to call them by their name, than the man in the pride of his nomenclature." And this expresses our joy and satisfaction, especially in the springtime—when Nature's day-dawn returns again—always after long expectancy and yearning, yet, finally, with a rush and unexpectedness which fills all things with the thrilling life of a joyful surprise,—when the giant trees themselves palpitate from roof to crown, when the bliss is too wide and general to allow us to pick out any special object—when the commonest things are to us as a simple story to a child—full of infinite opulence. Then we can forego the wish for the gardener's lore, which might distract, particularise, distress.

The rapture having subsided—a calm judgment and affection having kissed each other, we can then recall the season, the month, the week, and look round for the new familiar faces: consider how the times have been going: go into the ripe fields of memory, and make harvest of old times, sights, and feelings. It is April with which we take this outlook—a gusty and a tearful month; and if

we go into the country, as we did eight years ago, on the opening day, there is a dreariness in the landscape; the bare trees in the clear, still day, seem waiting for God's breath to give them life. And yet, we may have our garden glorified, even in this month. Four years ago we marked in its little bounds, wallflowers, primroses, dusty millers, the bloom of the flowering currant; tulips, gorgeous as the Assyrian hosts, gleaming in scarlet and gold; the everlasting white daisies, like new-born stars, in the grass borders; all the varieties of young and tender green leaves, as sweet as the sight of flowers; ferns, too, in their cool, moist sanctuaries; in the rockery the fresh emerald mosses, blue periwinkle, whose wreathes drew forth from Wordsworth the last great Article of Belief in Flowers:

> "'Tis my faith that every flower
> Enjoys the air it breathes."

Heather buds, cerastium growing pale as a statue in the dawn. On the first month of the following year we were very weak after a passing touch of the medicinal angel, called sickness, and were waiting for a fine day to enable us to get a draught of the outer air. March has been stormy—the wildest, perhaps, we ever knew—and on the evening of its last day there was a thunderstorm, whose dropping peals seemed truly Nature's passing bell to the saddening time. The next morning was a resurrection of life: it was full of the beauty and mildness of Spring. We went out for a short walk before noon,—and our languishing eyes opened on paradise. The purple crocus, pensively lovely, was in greatest profusion; the blossoms of the red-flowering currant bushes were timorously peeping out; the daffodils, which, by reason of the severe weather, had kept their beauty from the winds of March, felt the sudden heat, and were bursting their buds, as though desirous of saluting us. During the whole of the following week the garden became greener every day. So impetuous was its progress, that each morning we could plainly distinguish the increase of green over the previous night. Then came a change: Mid-Winter descended. And that dread Spring-day when the crucifixion took place—that time of the Passion—aye, and the whole of the uplifting days of Eastertide—was the fittest ever known on earth by time and season for the chaunting of Milton's august hymn—then, when the green promise of the year was suddenly covered up for the whole of the solemn days with a six-inch shroud of snow, and all its songs hushed by Winter's petrific mace.

The next year gave no better report. March had been exceptionally fine, but towards its close most baleful weather set in, and all the early promise was destroyed. The month knew scarcely

a fine day. The daffodils were beaten down; the flowering currants shrank and blackened; the leaf of the lilac came not forth. On the twenty-third there was a climax to the disheartened spring. The north-east wind, our most evil wind, brought sharp sleet and arrowy shower. All nature shivered before it. It was dreadful, equally on sea, and field, and moor. Two days afterwards a snow-storm swept the country. Our garden then sighed and looked full of woe. But, alas, to the north and the west the calamity fell more heavily. Over leagues of heath the young game was exterminated; and on the border moors, where the snow fell two feet on the level, the new-born lambs perished in thousands.

But not for such succession of annual gloom do we repine, or bate one jot of hope as to the month obtaining its due illumination from the Spring. This year the rearward gusts of the prolonged wintry season yielded during the first week of April. Mild weather came with a strong south-west wind. Two days after was Sunday, a day when we can at any hour we choose seek intercourse with the children of the sun. On returning from church on this day we saw the coltsfoot's yellow stars thick in the hedges; the daffodils had thickened their clusters, and made the gardens rejoice with their exhilirating pomp. Nevertheless, two mild days only sufficed to add some tulips to the flowers, which came in the middle of March. Strong gales drove from the south-east, and for a week we had intense cold. Then there came a change in the winds' airt. Breezes stole soft and warm from the west, and everything at once rejoices—bird, insect, flower. Well might the old mythology deem the zephyrs to be life-bringers, the very sweetness of whose breath produces flowers and fruit. At its motion we rise, we bound, and the intellect sparkles and reproduces.

So sang the poets of old, such was the belief in ancient days; now, with nobler faith, poet and Christian exclaims:—"How soon a smile of God can change the world." So is it. We no longer look from the window, we wander by our green borders. Specially we note the red-currant bushes right and left—probably, through the check from the frost—are more redundant of bloom than we have ever seen them—they are thickly and broadly dripping fire. Two balmy west-wind days succeed, and, behold, all the long-closed buds of bush and tree unfold, and hedges and garden display a sudden and eager green transformation. Later in the month we had a dark, wet day, a day such as gives desponding thoughts to men who are servile to the moment. But in coming home, at eventide, there was a break in the clouds as we reached the farm—a shaft from the setting-sun lighted on the fields; and at the instant, up sprang a lark plumed with song, and soared through the golden way. Could that pass into the heart unobserved! Should not man raise his

spirit in thanksgiving even though he only gets sunshine at the end of his day? Is the sacred promise valueless, that "at evening time there shall be light?" So can our April have charms amidst all its changfulness, and the gleam at the closing of the day, at the closing of life, comes from the Sun which prepares already the life to come; and this light at the end of the month, and this spiral song of our spring bird, are but a dawning brightness and a matin hymn; for, lo, May stands at the door, wreathed with smiles, and breathing odours from hawthorn and violet.

This is our birth-month. The teachings of nature have been too directly enforced upon us for us to be misled by the dull humour of some gifted minds in regard to our nativity. For every man-child there is rejoicing amongst the angel choirs; and nature brings gold, and frankencense, and myrrh to the babe in its cradle of life—its mother's lap; and his mission is a high and holy one, which alone should cause him to rejoice. Therefore, when this month opens we are jocund with all its vigour; and never yet had our gratefulness been dulled by the dark whisper of a sigh. There are lines in the *Life Drama* so full of what we recognise as the true inspiration of the season and the feelings which should respond to it, that they come—and have come through the old, old years, like a self-born thought, to our lips—

> "Daisies are white upon the churchyard sod;
> Sweet tears, the clouds lean down and give;
> This world is very lonely, O my God,
> *I thank Thee that I live.*"

The humblest poet has written at least some few lines full of immortal thought and sweetness, and these are of them.

Ah, we remember specially that one year, when our natal day seemed to issue fresh from the silver portals of eternity. No favour of man, no gift of fortune bestowed on it a dower. The previous month had softened towards its close. Our humble garden flowers were bountiful and beautiful. The morning was like summer when we left home to attend to our daily duties. The blossoms on the Siberian crab trees were large but unopened. It was Tuesday. And after our engagement we returned, not by our usual train, but from the river across the fields, about four o'clock in the afternoon. Not morn alone, but all the day was full of summer. The pastures gleamed joyously, the air was balm itself, the larks made the heavens one song. And, when we entered our gate, there, resplendent, full blossomed to the topmost points of their pyramidical boughs, shone the Siberian crab-trees. The sight was like an intelligent welcome. Yes, so we did feel it, and ever feel it. It was a greeting and benediction of nature. The whole month was true to the consecration. The garden in-

creased every day, and became an arbour, the laburnum hung gleaming garlands over our entrance in the evening; the rich wallflowers made the air odorous; the purple lilac came first; and at its roots the white flowers of the lilies of the valley gleamed in their green transparent shrines. In the upper chamber an angel sat to welcome us—the very angel of our flowers, herself a fairer flower—but Gloriana belongs to many scenes, and we speak more of her anon. Our natal day in the following year was not crowned with the same wealth of the Siberian crabs. It was, however, the Wednesday of the beautiful prayer of Bishop Andrewes, in which we blessed Him who gave the morning to us again that renewed the face of the earth, and implored Him to let our steps be guided and guarded by the angels of peace. Thus, if we missed the outburst of nature, we culled some of the rarest flowers of devotion.

And we may say that the day we first mentioned was a silver-lettered day—one that stands out from ten years. On the second succeeding year the distinguishing feature of the month appears in a peony rose—the ardent peony, beloved of Keats. There was only one flower, but it was gigantic. The plant had concentrated all its vitality in producing the huge crimson globe; it seemed to hold five summers in luscious deep folds. Indeed, we have noted that, from the prevalence of north-east winds, cold weather, and little rain, it has usually been the third week of the month before our Siberian crabs have been full of buds, and awaiting fine days to expand. On this occasion four days after that period the blossoms still lingered, in consequence of the bitter blasts. Through this delay a new appearance was assumed by the trees, from the buds being backed by the young, large, light green leaves—an unusual sight at blossom time. The end of that year's May saw the splendour of the crab trees frittered away. Peacemeal was all the wealth of the blossoms shed. Yet, even for this we had the compensation which is nature's law. One thing may be lost, but there is, through its extinction, greater richness for others; and some may be late, and more blessed for it. Here we have the yellow tresses of the laburnum; the violet panicles of the lilac are enlarging: and we see the glimmer of the buds of the lily of the valley in their shadowy recesses.

In the following year the first of May was a grey, cold day, and the wind blew strongly from the north-east—that wind of bitterness. It had been a laggard Spring: it did not speed one step for the Flower Month; and all from that saucy, cruel wind. At the end of the week it was still cold; and one morning, at four o'clock, there fell a covering of snow, as though the fields were preparing for a second winter sleep. The next few days was an inclement

time. Gloomy powers perturbed the air. Dis would let his fair goddess lighten the world; he would not let her come into her beloved chambers of the day. Therefore, our Siberian crabs halted on the blossom. After a night's rain the weather became mild and sweet, although still cloudy. Thunder rolled round the horizon during the afternoon: it pealed over the neighbourhood during the night—and in the morning we behold, even under the grey sky, the Siberiant gleaming brilliant—at length we had attained the bright consummation of the month.

The present year saw the first of May a fine day; but it was not until the fifth—which was as lovely as warm, and as still as any the year will give—that our Siberian crab-trees were gray, trembling on the blossom. Then we noted in the ditches a prolific wild star-flower—probably the field-mouse ear. There was a sprinkling of blossom on the cherry and pear trees climbing the house front, the latter being in heavy leaf. The wallflowers were plenteous, yielding to the air a haunting perfume. Pansies there were of many kinds—some nestling in green quiet, whilst knots, in open spaces, joined in the festival of joy and light. The wild red campion was under the crab trees. We had the odorous stars of the narcissi—of old devoted to the Furies,—the dun-hued polyanthus, and the grass borders were sparkling with the daisy, the morning star of flowers, as its lover was of English song. A fortnight later we had to record a rainy and blowy week. It was the Sabbath—baptised with early showers; after them came sunshine, shadowed with fleeting clouds. It was a Spring day on the verge of Summer, and our hearts were lifted up by the love melodies of a choir of larks. The hawthorn was showing glittering colyrabs in the hedge of the kitchen garden; the bachelor's buttons were fully formed; the truss of the rain-shrinking lupin had taken its mature shape: each bud of peachy bloom was ready to burst into a winged blossom; our iris showed one superb flower—that is worth a kingdom: we have a special preference for that imperial flower. Although we had a cold, retarding Spring, the first hot days of March had so propelled the flowery nations, that even at the chilly end of May we had the lilac in full bloom. The laburnum's gold, the fragrant lilies of the valley, the splendours of the crocuses, were all gone. But here were the tulips' fires: the dull-red valerian on the top of its lush stem; ranunculus; violets in plenty; the embudded everlasting peas, forming dense hedges of green; and we rejoiced in the strawberry-blossom—promise of richest fruit in lowliest place.

Now we experience more fully the pleasing vicissitudes that accompany observations on nature's ways. Watching the coming and going of the beautiful; the unexpected haste of its manifestations; their inexplicable tardiness; suffering the losses, acquiring

the gains of the seasons. All this is more acutely felt as June opens,—the month that should have a settled course, and be adorned with its appointed blooms. With us it is not so; and we have more richly to obtain the revenue of compensation. Beautiful was its second Sabbath evening some years ago, robed in watery sunlight, after long and heavy showers during the day. The iris stood grandly over the flower beds, larger and bolder than in any previous year; cerastrum raised its milk-white flowers, raised itself higher than its wont; tulips lifted their flame goblets to pledge the God of day in his parting; and the ladies' garter lifted their banneret to wave a bright farewell.

Another year we more particularly noted the chill rockets, the beauty of the alder tree, and the extraordinary massiveness of the gorgeous crimson poppies. Next year June roses, June violets, scarlet poppies, geraniums, windows smothered with the everlasting peas,—we gathered all these in one swift glance, which in its last sweep was cheered by the small token our garden gives of autumn's Amalthean bounty, in the cherries on the wall, and the one pear peeping out of too lush leafiness. In the following year we remark, besides, the flowing streamers of the laburnum, the fiery tulips, the lanceolate leaves of the ladies' garter, the iris, the noble *fleur-de-lis*, more glorious than ever, and, oh, that weeping ash, so strong in its branches, yet so graceful, and lovingly giving its summer-house the coolest, closest, sweetest privacy. That same year we had a most enchanting time among the wild spring-flowers at Cosberstone, where, from the wooded heights of the Tees, we saw, far below, large spaces of forget-me-nots, like tracts of blue sky, and primroses making the leafy gloom luminous. But twelve months later we find the month ushered in by an intensely cold night, and the advent day was dark and showery. The daffodils and spiked crocuses had been torn to pieces in the stormy spring; all vernal progress had been retarded; so that, although the garden was lovely, its loveliness was that of the first of May, five years before. Finer days followed, but they were windy; indeed, on our next observation the day would have been exceedingly hot, but for the strong west wind, which tossed the branches of the trees and the sprays of the bushes with bacchanal glee, as though it were wild with joy at the return of the sun. The crab-trees were white, and needed but quietude and they would be resplendent, as on our birthday; the ever-gracious wallflower was abundant; the violet ran in purple streams round the borders; bachelor's buttons were bursting their green; the lilac was showing thick amethystine buds; there were sapphire patches of wild hyacinth, like shreds of a cheerful spring heaven, and the moonlight of primroses in the shade, and the foam of woodruff was scattered under the alder. Everything was

was lonely, albeit of an earlier day; and there was a trembling promise of richer consummation,—the trees were all of a tender green, ready to display a fuller leafiness, and the first still hot day would open veins of fire over all the ground. And as was promised, so, in the faithfulness of nature, it came to pass. In the subsequent year, summer kindled the early days of March. Then everything fell back. We had a belated time. During the first days of June cold prevailed every hour. Its second Sunday was wet. The following Tuesday saw a downpour. Men were groaning at the drowned season. Such are times of pit explosions. The day was cold, and moist, and dark, with a keen north-east wind. Fires were still kept up in-doors, and the windows steamed from the blaze of the gas and the fire. But a fortnight later and we are jubilant. We have brightness and heat. What a difference two weeks can make—aye, two hours! We look round with amazement on what has been beneath our eyes all this time, hidden, or unobserved; or is it that nature has transfigured all things? Under every weary drawback we must acknowledge to the golden compensation which keeps the stars in their courses, and metes out food for body and soul. So this year has been an exceptionally fine one for the grasses of the field; their spikes and plumes have shone and waved with a brave magnificence. It was in the spring of 1871, by the country roads at Gretna Green, by the hedgerows of Canobie, and on the delectable banks of the Coquet, overlooking the ruins of Warkworth Castle, that our eyes became fully opened to the beauty of the wildflowers. And it is this year we seem to be aware for the first time of the glory of the grasses of the fields and hedges. But, now, the sun has flashed forth its unclouded beams, and the golden air is calm, our eyesight is sharpened, and in our own little garden domain, we find ourselves embathed in floral sweetness and brightness. Two small plots we have detached from our house—the one a croquet-ground, the other a kitchen-garden, adjoining each other. We go to the croquet ground and find round its sides thick rows of lupins, skyblue, lavender, and white, light and laughing as a country bridal. Returning to the front of our home, we observe that the valerian's dun flame is still with us; the ladies' garter has grown into dense bushes; under the alder we see the red bells of the foxglove—the gayest halls wherein the garden elves hold high merriment; still, there remains one blushing flower on the rhododendron, and the iris—that royalest of all the shining tribes—still shines and maintains its prerogative in its absolute purple. On the rockery there is a plumage of ferns waving above the periwinkle; there are mosses, and the stellate heriselook. There are rich fern tufts at the roots of the ash, the lilac, and the willows —and out of one mass a single poppy strikes like a tongue of fire

through cavernous darkness. The flower and the frankincense of the lilac and the lily of the vale have gone; but we have got rarer odours, and other flowers, and the blessing of the Lord is still on the garden. Apollo atoned for his delay, the sun shafts became more and more intense, and in three days' time we had the hottest of all the year—one of the hottest of England's years. We were at the great annual amusement of the north that day, and had to seek the deepest shades of a dene on our way home. In some parts of the kingdom it was 130 degrees in the sun, and railway metals were twisted into the shape of the letter S. The month went out with the Sabbath, and looking round, we observed the cinque foil in the hedgerow; a field pond was covered with a silver star-flower; in our kitchen-garden we had sweet-william, white pinks, lupins, light lavender rockets; in our garden the weeping ash made the summer-house a bower—the bower of a single tree. The view from it was grateful, lovely, soothing. There were the lavish hedges of everlasting peas—a light of many hues illumining both sides of the house porch. On the walls we saw the reddening pips on the cherry-tree: red roses burning among them, and the white rose climbing high at its side. Under the windows were the ruddy penstemons and the yellow calceolarias. At the gate the elder was whitening; the deep borders of the purple violets were slumbering in the long summer brightness. On the rockery, just before us, white stones were glancing out of the perennial green of the creepers, mosses, and ferns. In the beds are fresh old friends—the long-spiked lavender, the sedge-like wild gladioli, crimson to the tips, the streaked leopard lily, canterbury bells, rivulets of virginia stock, pinks with the colour of their name, and those with dark crimson eyes and streaks, white serrated edges, and clove scented; moss roses, with clefts red as the lips we love; foxglove; ladies' garter, bushier and more luminous than ever; poppies, blazing like meteors—and here, in her moist nook, is the queen of the meadow, showing her pearly crest.

Even *July* with us suffers from the unstable climate; but whether it belongs to the month itself, or to its disendowed predecessor, we now become embathed in floral beauty. Four summers ago we observed that it presented us with shining patches of rockets; the ruby congregation of wild gladioli; the cardinal poppies in supreme consistory, behind which the magnificent doge-like iris drooped its crest in unstooping, dignified decay; the roses burning here, blushing there, and yonder showing a nuptial paleness, whilst the sleepless moss-rose challenged as a grace what some affirm its deformity,—yes, as is the down on the lips of an Apollo; London pride, whose modest bloom wakens in us the wondrous awe o childhood, in this case inexplicable to us; it holds some secret of

our early life to which the head answers, but memory fails to peak; sweet-william, which seems to have an antique and unm ltable language charactered on its breast; the stately foxglove; the ladies' garter seed blossom; ferns and mosses peeping coolly out of the shade; the Crœsus-pitchers of the calceolaria; and gerani ms in all their audacity of colour, as though they would usurp all praise to the illuminiug pomp of their multitudinous cressets. A s mmer later we had to welcome our first succession of warm da s only with the opening of July. On the fifth day, on looking c er our flower treasures, we had to be thankful that the white rose on the house wall kept their pure radiance after a fortnight's blos ming; that our few cherries were ripening; that an apple or two had to be ours; that we had a fair supply of the flowers whose in entory belong to June. The everlasting peas gave their thick, u failing bloom; virginia stocks were breaking forth like light fr m the brown soil; the moss-rose was just come; the canterbury b lls were about to burst; geraniums were dispreading their crimson c nopies; the lavender spiked anonyma is here. And were we left a lone to rejoice in all sweetness and beauty? No; half-past seven o'clock in the evening though it was, when we walked in the g den, a lark rose with immitagable song, making all the region mu ic; and the bees were abroad—they were in the scarlet foxglove nd the white—and when we hear that hoary sound, and see the gl eaming bells of that flower beloved of Wordsworth, we hear, too, th poet's chant in the garden; we hear his sounding words on that winged wonder which will last as long as shall the honeyed progeny. Days followed, in the middle of the month, as hot as a furnace; and it was a month of roses, and the calceolarias gave their amplest bloom.

Next year, midsummer time had been indifferently co l; and the first of July was the green opening of summer. The golden rain of laburnum had been shed; the lilac, the burning ton ues of the tulips were gone; but we had a sprinkling of roses, r d and white; the valerian was in its bed of green; the thickets o ever-lasting peas were spitted with legions of buds ready to burs t; the low creeping musk, with topaz buds, was embalming th long summer days and nights; in all its lovely gracefulness was t e rich blue lavender-shaped incognito; we had large masses of urple spikes of sage; and stocks strong in flower, though dwarfe At the vicarage we found the guelder rose flourishing bounteou ly on the first Sabbath evening. The middle of the month was stu ngled by a north-east wind and heavy misty rain; yet the very c dness of the summer made it more green. Our trees were never s rich in leaf before. It was delightful to behold the many thic -clad branches tossing joyously in the wild wind. Let them revel, w said, let them swing and hurl themselves in blissful delirium; let them

triumph, as triumph they do, over the unseasonable cold; for, alas, they have a worse enemy, and suffer other than a natural decay. With biting tooth, as we have said, the vapours of the region destroy the fine tissue of our short linden and sycamore, and they know no summer maturity, no lingering autumn splendour, their virgin greenness is fretted, and in a few weeks their every leaf shows like the web of the spider. Let them, therefore, toss themselves with glee on the waves of the wind, let them dance on the elemental turbulence, for it is no foe; at their feet the wild gladioli of crimson-purple hue are finer than usual, and grow thickly together; the white roses and the red are profuse, and the air is continually laden with their heavy perfume,—let the thickly-leaved branches dance and rejoice, for the elements never take or keep back, but they yield a hundredfold, and there is delight in the garden, though even the breath and gusts of March were here. The opening of the month this year were the days of the glory of the massed wild gladioli, with a thousand downy spears freshly springing in their ranks, seen to supreme advantage when entering the gate. Their gleaming million crimson pavilions from that point contrasted vividly against the grass borders and deep rows of violet. On the first Sunday we noted what had departed and what had waned; but we quickly arrested the poor inquisitor—that we might not disparage the hourly gifts of the heavens. This was an augmenting time—for beauty, flowers, and song. We had been wakened by a thrush at a quarter past three o'clock in the morning, and many were the ever-new familiar friends that we saw as we looked around. Conspicuous at the side gate stood a large yellow lily; moss-roses showed ruby crevices in their buds, foxgloves had increased, snapdragons had multiplied, the minarets of the canterbury bells were nearly perfect, white roses on bush and wall were bringing forth new constellations—the maiden's blush was in all its lovely completeness, everywhere we saw the heart's rejoice, parent of pride of the eye, the common favourite of a hundred leaves, penstemons exalt their many trumpets, everlasting peas had opened their myriad wings on tiptoe for flight, as Keats sang, violas had deepened their ranks, the poppies stood in blazing phalanx, pansies were bearing prolifically as if to confirm a beatitude, ladies' garter had thrown up the towering seed spears with pennant leaves below, large stocks were appearing, and we saw in the outward hedgerows the cinque-foil creeping with manifold stars. Often at this season we have a night's sleeplessness; the reason we shall not venture to say,—it may be of the complexion of that which stirred the spirit of the father of our poetry.

Rest I ne wist, "Why that I ne might."

On the ninth of this month we had a second quiet wakeful night.

We witnessed the sunrise. At three o'clock we once more heard the thrush at his earliest matins. Three quarters of an hour afterwards we rose and stole into our small south-looking sitting-room where hang the family portraits. Peeping through the venetian blinds, how heavenly was the pearly light—how supernatural the garden in its meek green robes and its wreaths of scarlet and purple. The whole passed gently into our soul like light into the eyes. We seemed to catch the scene unawares, when in earth's sleeping hours it had put on an unearthly loveliness, the flowers bending to the east, each chalice filled with the morning's wine, were perfuming nature's holy eulharist. It moves us even now, moves us ever, as do some few sweet sudden scenes, bringing a blissful oppression, thick heart-beating, too deep for words, for tears, for sighs. On our customary evening-hour walk with Gloriana we found the queen of the meadow lush and plentiful in a hedge ditch near the railway, loading the air with its spicy fragrance. By the middle of the month we lost many of the bright generation, but the everlasting peas were still plentiful, the calceolaria showed fine groups of their yellow and brown pitchers, the roses had been prolific, the pansy—this heart's-ease—this trinity-flower—this ever sweet food of lover's thoughts—beloved of Shakspeare of Bunyan —nay, beloved of all—full coloured, there with pencilled rays, has been and is abundant. Stocks, crimson, white, purple with large tresses, give heavy odours to the air, the poppy blazes high among the green, and the long purple spiked anonyma is with us yet. As the month goes out we ask, what is this scarlet and prolific annual, is it red flax, or larkspur? And so comes a question at the end of all things, and life itself.

The month of August two years ago entered prodigal of roses. Cloudy cool days, warm but still cloudy, alternated and probably assisted the roseate generation. This was the richest rose time we have known for years. Hundreds came out together, and in succession. Descending from our chamber in the mornings, our front door was always open, and the overpowering odours filled the whole house. The west side of the porch was a very bower of roses, there was a delicious continuity of display throughout the garden. Roses of all hues—deep damask, maiden blush, York and Lancaster,—moss-roses were most abundant, and we noted our sweet-briar, too, showed its rose. Then we had, besides, the other lingering loves of the garden,—the fuschia, the scarlet geranium, the low-lying golden Moses' beard, the blue bonage, clove-smelling pinks in large bunches, the azure lobelia, the flaming nasturtiums, the saffron-leaved feather-pen, the simple, ever-fragrant mignonette, and the Aaron's rod, just budding at its pinnacle. This month, too, is not without its changes. After all the marvellous pomp of summer

came prodigious showers. From St. Swithin's day it rained interminably, until prayers had to be offered in the churches for fine weather. That petition was not immediately answered. The rain was not stayed, but descended until the very highways were floating. And this while the foliage of the bushes waxed strong and thick from the copious refreshment; but the roses were shattered, every flower was beaten down, and not a bud dare open. In a few days the rainbow came, and all nature laughed again, and the month passed happily away. This year there was no such rainy time. On the second Sabbath we saw all the darlings of the month. Besides the roses flushing round the garden plots and the other flowers we have named were many-visaged snapdragons, grotesque in form and pencilling; slender annuals with stars and bells; deep crimson carnations, named by the Romans "Flowers of God," to show their esteem of the divinity of its form; unwithering crisp star-flowers; the long heath with its flesh-coloured chalices, and the whiteness of the summer snow.

September sees many of our long-loved, many-hued friends departed, a palpable change has come over the garden; we miss the sight and the fragrance in dearly cherished spots; generations have vanished until another year, and new ones have come. We do not write flower epitaphs—they live, like all good, in their lives—it is our own weakness to say that this and that *has been*. They are with us still if our love is true, with us even so as that mignonette which now gives balm to the air around us, although concealed from our gaze—we can scarcely call the little precious thing a flower, it is only a sweetness. There are, moreover, some of our earliest flowers here still, long-lived as though, like sweet thoughts, they would never die, and they give the tender grace of other days to the aspect, which is varied with the appearance of new-comers. And these, too, are of the loveliest. The sweet peas, which are climbing up one of the short, withered Irish yews, meek pink in colour and of delicious odour; the fully budded Aaron's rod in the west bed confronting the Moses' beard in the last; late fuschias, with scarlet tunics and tremulous tassels; the bell-shaped nasturtiums, showing the smouldering embers of the summer, asters, white purple and yellow, the autumn's lustrous melancholy star, the vesper of the year, love-lies-bleeding, the too much neglected marigold, and a scene of delicate annuals and perennials with clouds of colour and flashing gleams of silver, ruby, sapphire, and yellow lights, scarlet fruit on the crab trees, as rich as blossoms of japonica, and the few pears on the wall, which announce the glories of the orchards.—yes, really, they do—quantity is nothing to the imagination which can see Helen's beauty in a bron of Egypt; and, as poets of nature, we transcend

the philosophic maxim, and say not one half, but one hundredth part is better than the whole. Nor are we now without the early music of the spring; for on the third Sunday we have heard, between eight and nine o'clock in the morning, the lark rising with his song, as though he were singing canticles [illegible] beloved to chain her maternal cares on the nest.

So passes half the circle of the year. And we find in all this food from heaven; and that life is worth some of its pain and trouble, if one had nothing more than one garden to beautify and enrapture it. We know, as already said, that we have little else than cottage flowers. But, then, we *can* say. "Here we have flowers!" And if we could say no more than that we have *a flower*, even that would be much. A Flower! The word does not represent a mere thing; it implies something higher than a wilderness of flowers; it signifies the phenomena which appear in single completeness, and yet is an assemblage of organs, wonderful in their variety, their construction, their combination, their adaptation, and which body forth the Great Miracle—the creation, sustentation, renovation, reproduction, which keeps sustains and animates the whole universe. Then there is the signification of the wood. It has come to us from the flower of races, the Greek, and means *flame*—conveying to the mind activity and light, and heaven-tending aspiration, the spirit of the sun, all beauteousness under all and any manifestation, and unceasing ascension to its source. Humble flowers are ours, each and all, but the humblest has in it heavenliest seed, which seeks the sun from the darkness. So here, as in the lordliest demesne, we come into the presence, and observe the movings, and stand before the mysteries, of nature. On that word, too, we shall pause. For we do not use it after the empty manner of a tourist, nor the inutile utilitarian, but as a profound symbol. Emerson somewhat brightened its face in his Works and Days; "with its delicate future tense—*natura, about to be born.*" The august word fills our heart of hearts with awe, with gratitude, and a large divine, unspeakable certainty. It give us a dim sense of the eternity of Love in which we live and move, and have our being. Whispers that even now, when more than half our days are told after the far-off heavenly pre-existence—we are just going forth on the endless pilgrimage of Love and Life. Aye, is not Psyche ever among the flowers? Oh, butterfly! thou winged flower! supreme signal and symbol; prime representative of reproduction! Thou beauteous energy; thou shining Psyche! Thy glorious dress is but a bridal apparel. Love and love alone is thy short life! Thou art joy to the eye, delight to the intelligence, and consolation to the heart!

We have spoken of our landscape which into smoke decays;

but this is not always the case. The veil is sometimes withdrawn; and specially on the Sabbath when the fires of labour rest. Then we have an enjoyment in the far-off becoming visible; in well-known spots being brought, as it were, to our home. We go to our upper chamber. It may be a June day, a little after noontide, when thunder showers have just passed. The clouds are rifted, but not dispersed. There is bright sunshine here and gloom yonder; ebon masses seemingly pregnant with destruction, edged with grey, deep purple, and downy gold, and, keenly resplendent against the blackness, gulfs of intolerable splendour. Now, in the remote High Fell, beyond the river to the south-west, we see houses, a windmill, the church and its spire. The fields around us are greener, more shining and more silent after the heavy rain; the brown haycocks stand fair on an emerald cloth. Beneath our eyes the garden seems a new thing—is it because we come to it for a moment with a brightened vision, or hath it really a rapture of its own, in the fresh breath of the hour? the lines of beauty formed by the green borders; the flower-beds shining in rainbow colours with flowers familiar to the early summer time, as to the blue spring, make the return of the sun a joy in their joy. And this has a new loveliness in the setting of the landscape, thus rarely seen clear to the horizon and far hill-top.

There are other enjoyments brought to us by our garden and neighbourhood, and there are other moods attendant than those we have mentioned. The adjacent farm provides us twittering congregations of sparrows, which, in their spring felicity, would make a leafless grove jocund—now in the alder, now in the linden, and anon in the depth of the bushes they are fluttering, pecking, unresting, in their amorous debates and rivalries. There is pleasant work for the fancy, if it had no more nourishment than the heart-shaped leaves of the lilac trees; but its pastures here are large and ever new, as when a flower—now it is one flower, another day it is another flower, that arrests the attention with a revelation,—and we behold it soul-speaking, like the rose of Milton, which stands out fervid with Heaven's ruby on a dark background of blindness, representative of all the rosy tribes—"summer's rose:" when the devotional service of flowers is suggested to the mind, and we recognise in the opening bud a hymeneal hymn: in its seed a grateful "Amen;" when in the silver blossoming of our Siberian crabs we feel that we behold, for once unsullied, the vesture of the morning of the year, or the bridal chaplet of the confirmed Spring; and anon, they are white clouds of witnesses to the lovely, unswerving order of the seasons; and then, again, a very dawn of angels that whisper the psalm of nature's goodwill to man, and peace on earth.

Nor are there wanting the wide variety of thoughts, and feelings, and emotions generated by the season, the seasons of the day, and the results of the workings of the elements. Garden-lore, we think, has more in it than touches the soul of a gardener, whilst it appropriates all his intelligence—for in these plots of flowers and shrubs are awakened the ruling and creative powers of the mind; here is culture for the calm and watchful eye, vigilance and method in observation—for to receive beauty we need to be prepared to receive it at all hours of the year. In lieu of the gardener's industry we have nature's own imperious impulse, which stirs the deepest fountain of life. She hurries us on with the flying hours. In Winter we look for Spring, in Spring for Summer. When the transition takes place we are reluctant to leave the charms that have beguiled us. Jean Paul gives the key-note of this experience when he exclaims: "Thou kind May of this year, thou deservest to thyself all the songs which were ever made to thy rude namesake!" But she will not let us loiter with a hymn. Everything is changed: we also—and thus we grow. Such is the general experience and teaching. As for the particular, when the vernal spirit is abroad—slipped from the corpse of the earth, and carrying joy to every heart, according to its true mission, there is a rapture and bliss which cannot be explained except that it is our whole being sympathising with, and yielding surety to, the longing of the soul for immortality, and the few flowers we have are vocal with divine meanings—the daffodils are become the gentle familiar Lent lilies, articulate the Lord Christ's speech, and affirm the Father's care intending all things. When the Spring advances with growing intensity of vital action, and the whirl of the year grows in its course, we grow also—then we relapse—we drink in calmly the sunshine of calm days—until, overwhelmed with the strange, superfluous glory, having long forgotten the thraldom of the old dull time, we begin to desire a visit of what we deemed the weary, grey days, we salute an afternoon shower, rain sweet as tears we feel it, which cools the emotions of sultry eve; we rejoice in a cloudy, pleasing, melancholy day, and welcome a descent of the healing waters on the thirsty earth—our spirits then rise with showery vehemence, and we find a mournful transport in the sobbing boughs.

Then there are bright minor observations, as when May is redolent of feelings which inexplicably call to our mind that this was the month when Chaucer "bade farewell to his book and his devotion," to get his sorrows softened by "the blissful sight" of the resurrection of the deathless daisy; in which we get a pure glimpse of the heart-religion of the poet through the lattice-work of his antique English; and the reminiscence throws us into a

pleas ng perplexity as to how the lowly, gracious one, the balmy air, does erfume our thoughts. Also, when we pass over the notes in the s ale of flowers, from the full flush of floral beauty, with the lesso spread over all, that the deepest significance, after Christ's gos l, is in the fact that Adam's Bible was in the flowers, trees, dells d stream of Eden; and we have to read the truths by the re-a quir nent of that lore in latest days; the radiant tulips, or carn ations p oud, rising after the shower as fresh as Thetis out of the waves; th quivering movements of the lordly blossom, as if sev l, petal, st men, or pistil were intelligently sensible to the life f the mom nt; the opening of the bud when the birth-struggle is a nost visibl to the sight; to the consideration of the mystery of c nsummatio in the seed—the presence of the generations yet to c me—of th resurrection and the life.

Beautiful s is all this, and the fluctuations of the months which ever proclai that the dues of nature are paid, if not regularly, then with golden usury. A , if one thing s wanting, as the orga close of a golde strain, we obtain it by goi into the croq et-ground and beholding the grandeur and the glory of the dyin day. W there illumine those chambers of the soul which can ly be l ntened by the setting sun, and prepare ourselves or the l ushir g of the eventide.

To s nply enter our garden is the effecting of a miracle. Th mean pressive cares, the burdensome hopes of the day drop of like hristia load before the cross, into what is at once a pit of ob n and a sepu re of light. Our present feeling is all-suffi- ent. Rich loveliness, luxurious light and shade, b ing only ima s and thoughts of delight and ma.

Our eyes see that miracle on every leaf, as did the King of Sian when he asserted the boundless charity of Heaven against the i tole nt Christian, by asking him to show two leaves alike. We el the healing of nature in a new beauty. Our ears may catch the whisper of an insect now and then, but the dark chorus of th world is on the far horizon unheard. Our thick, close lilac edges shut out the very sight of field and road. And then come a deepening and a withdrawing—as great a miracle as augh beneath or in the heavens an overshadowing and a re- veali g. The incoming of the evening is a fuller outgoing of the soul. There is a rapturous stillness. The censer of nature silen y sends forth the spirit of sweetness through the twilight air; there is a breathing perfume everywhere. Now, can we possess ours ves of the gift of the evening star. A silvery light diffuses itself over all things: we look, and this evening brightness centres in th throbbing of yonder golden planet. Presently here is a dark ing, and we begin to see the sparkling dust from Heaven's

footstool flying through space. The mind gradually becomes agitated: the night of still enchantment is over. Night is here, who "brings as many thoughts as he wears stars." The mind spreads forth her wings—in a few hours the flower of day has been long closed—we retire to our chamber—we wrap night's shroud cloth around us—we prepare for the dying of the life of the world, we take just such space as will serve us in the cemetery—in the dark furrow we lay ourselves down, as we murmur with Novalis, "Thou night's inspiration, thou slumber of heaven, comest over me!" It is already here. The soul has hid away from the sepulchre; the mystery of music has risen from the rod, and gone with celestial song into the heaven of heavens.

Such is the ecstasy, the balm, the vision, the repose. Proteus is in the garden as well as Psyche; the elemental god is here, in earth and æther, water, fire, ever transforming himself; here, too, is Chloris, the fairest goddess of flowers, without whom even Juno, queen of power and beauty, was barren, and who still, by her spiritual flower-forces, quickens the soul, and makes it bring forth progenies of strong, bright thought. These are breathed sometimes from the constellated glory of the whole of the living masses, for the greatest emotion and impression may arise from the complete scene entering the mind; in some moods, as with beauty, sorrow, separation, details defraud us of the grandeur as well as of the splendour and the gloom; the most powerful effect comes from the general, free and flowing figure—thus Milton describes death, and the loveliness of Eve, and the Greek painter depicted grief in the averted, covered face. But the darlings of nature can, with us also, have a sweet individuality and a bright particular reference.

In their frequent wildness and disorder they present a fine effect, but each flower has also its apartness, its tone, and often its memories. Feelings and scenes are enwrought with the tresses of the flower-beds, and the trailing green of the rockery. That crisp, low creeping-plant recalls the craggy parsley fern-path to Scale Force, the sombre mountains enclosing Buttermere, the cavernous cleft in the rocky side of the hill, the darkness within the long, streaming fall. That bunch of the forget-me-not—sacramental flower of love—carries us to woody shades that lie beneath Romuldkirk, and we see the glitter and hear the murmur of the Tees. These primroses tell of spring days, fresh meadows and water courses; and those cowslips are pensioners of memory, and bring round us dells and green hills and holiday times long, long ago. The pansy at our feet doth the same tale repeat, of the glory of the dream, which flies not only with the flowers, but ever reappears with them in the quickening spring.

No, they pass not away. That which has mingled with our heart's blood cannot die utterly. The tenderness of the flowers finds a lasting-place in our bosoms; our elevated hopes have been nurtured with their loveliness. Mrs. Somerville was wont to say: "Whatever flowers grow in heaven, I think I shall regret *our own* roses and mignonette." When the gentle, fiery fancy of Jean Paul Richter was passing to the heavenlier world, his last murmur was: "My beautiful flowers, my lovely flowers." When Tom Hood was ill, it was feared unto death, he said that "He smelt the violets." Keats, in one of his reveries wherein he traversed past scenes and emotions, just before his departure from earth, said that "the intensest pleasure he had received in life was in watching the growth of flowers;" and after a peaceful, forward look, he said—"I feel the flowers growing over me." Great has been the love for flowers, and that it passes not away when the spirit of man returns to God who gave it, is testimony to us of the strong foundations on which our own love and trust are built. Their manifestations and admonition in our garden are sources of joy and strength; but the conclusion of the matter is assured in divine fulness when we hear the love of them mingled with the living everlasting hopes, and lingering on the lips of dying saints—when we see them lighten the tomb with rays from the bright kingdom beyond. They never have betrayed a human heart, and the spirit tastes bliss that it knows to be immortal, when it sees them about the coffin—a sprinkling from the eternal spring of the realm of light where the brother spirit now abides.

FRIEDRICH WIECK.

In a quiet street of one of the suburbs of Dresden there rises above the surrounding dwellings a house under the roof of which were spent the last moments of a remarkable life. No tablet attracts the stranger's eye, only the inhabitants of the place show it to their friends, and tell them that for thirty years a man lived there who, by his talent for teaching, acquired a world-wide reputation. Friedrich Wieck belonged to those enthusiastic lovers of music of which every century produces but few; perchance, in time to come, the pen of genius may recognise in him a fitting hero of artist life—another George Sand will write the history of another Prospero.

Thrown upon the world at an early age, Friedrich Wieck grew up amidst great privations. His parents lived in a small Prussian town, when he, their eldest child, was born, August 18th, 1785. The years of his childhood fell thus in the time of the French Revolution and the subjugation of Germany by Napoleon, and our youthful hero experienced many of the miseries and privations inflicted by the conqueror's sword. His love for music and his great talent manifested themselves at an early age; but his parents determined that the life of their child should not be sacrificed to a profession which, at that time, held out little or no prospect of succeeding in the world. They would, on no consideration, bring him up to be a musician. He was to study theology, and in time to embrace a profession which would at least afford him a maintenance. Moreover, this line of study offered considerable advantages in the way of exhibitions, which might he obtained and held at the University during his course of study. He was accordingly sent to the Gymnasium at Torgau; but with what means of support? He lived on bread and butter, and looked with longing to Sunday, which would bring him at least a hot dinner. With such scanty food he could never become strong, and he was and remained a delicate boy. All the time at his disposal he devoted to the instruments attainable. These were bad enough, and he was a self-taught performer; but he found his chief joy in producing the tones which spoke the language so dear to him. At length he was pronounced ready for the University, and was permitted to go to Wittenberg. The certificate which he received on leaving the Gymnasium contained the censure that he paid more attention to the *ars musica* than to the sciences; nor did he now

amend in this respect. He completed his studies because his parents wished it, and mounted his pulpit to preach, but only once, having an inward conviction that he was not destined for this calling.

After having maintained himself for a few years as preceptor, he resolved to establish at Leipzig a depôt for pianofortes, for which purpose the Police Inspector Streubel lent him 6000 thalers, taking Wieck's honest face as his only security.

Leipsic had always been the centre of much musical cultivation, stimulated by the celebrated Gewandhaus concerts; and a new life now began for our hero, a revelling in sounds hitherto only heard in dreams. But there likewise grew upon him the sad certainty that it was too late for him to follow the career of an executive artist. He began to teach, to give lessons in music, and made it his object in life to lead his pupils to the high standard of perfection, which he himself was withheld from attaining. He tried to impart to his pupils his own passionate zeal, and in order to incite them to yet more rapid progress, his thoughts were incessantly occupied with the construction of a method that would help the student to get more easily through the tedious work that must be accomplished.

Wieck found himself at length in a position to marry, and chose as his wife Marianne Tromlitz, daughter of the Cantor Tromlitz, at Plauen, in the Saxon Voigtland. On the 13th of September, 1819, his wife became the mother of a little girl—who was destined to surpass his proudest dreams. Little Clara did not at once entitle her father to found any great hopes on her capabilities. Her development was but slow, and it was only with her fifth year that her ear opened to the charm of sounds. As soon as her father discovered that she had understanding for music, he began her musical education; and soon her rapid progress filled him with joy and surprise. Those who were witnesses to the brilliant execution acquired in so short a time blamed the father for tormenting the child and undermining her health. He smiled at these reproaches, for he knew how little were her efforts, how simple and natural the means he employed, and how carefully he avoided tiring her; and, indeed, the little Clara grew up under his treatment to be a bright, healthy, and happy child.

The method of his instruction remained meantime the secret of the father, and was not to be made public until it should be justified by the result. This secret, as it is now known to us, is founded on the simple and natural principle that music is an art, the study of which must be pursued with love. The first endeavour of the teacher should be to awaken in the child a fondness for sounds, to make the music-lesson a pleasure, not an irksome task.

For this reason Wieck was careful to avoid expecting of a pupil more than he could with facility execute. He made each hand practise at first alone until their perfect independence one of the other made their playing together natural. The learning of the notes only then began, when he was sure that the proper holding of the hand would offer no more difficulties, and the position of the keys had been perfectly mastered, so that the help of the eye was no longer needed in finding the notes on the key-board. The pieces to be played he carefully chose adapted to the powers of the pupil; and the most simple air well played was worth more to him than a long piece badly performed. If the child wearied in learning a piece, he laid it aside, but only to take it up again after the lapse of a few weeks, and to return to it at intervals until it was mastered; and he required of the child to play every piece by heart, and without a fault. The taste was formed in such a manner that the child of itself would never be satisfied with superficial playing.

These are the leading principles of Friedrich Wieck's method, and those who have had an opportunity of witnessing the wonderful results, will recognise its value.

Wieck disliked superficially musical pupils, as did Emanuel Garcia; and, in fact, every good master despises dilettanti. Every child was therefore brought to be sufficiently at home on the instrument to be able to make a prelude in the key of the piece before him, and, if required, also to transpose it.

Teaching soon became such a passion with Wieck that it occupied his thoughts by day, his dreams by night, and was the object of his whole life. To hear him, one would have thought that there was no other problem for busy mankind to solve than how to become musical.

Talented pupils without means he was always ready to instruct gratis, and he likewise provided them with pupils. As it was his great aim to discover the best method possible of teaching, he sought the society of all the celebrated masters of his time.

Kalkbrenner at that time was astonishing Paris; Czerni, Vienna; but in the style of neither of these did Wieck find anything to make his own. As far as regards the holding of the hand, and the beautiful tone resulting therefrom, he followed in the steps of Field; and he used to maintain that the best instrument only then had a good tone when the performer knew how to produce it.

The little Clara gave her first concert in her ninth year, and from that time the eyes of the artistic world rested on the gifted child. Robert Schumann, her future husband, entered about that time the University of Leipsiz, became acquainted with the family of Wieck, and was so delighted with the little Clara's playing that he begged her father to receive him as a pupil.

In her eleventh year Clara set out with her father on her first tour, and it was then that the method of Wieck first became known to larger circles, and pupils from all parts flocked to him. His sweet, amiable, and gifted child became the darling of the German people, who were charmed with her unassuming natural manners In her, her father had formed the first pianist of her time—nay, perhaps of all times; and when Robert Schumann became her husband, Wieck left Leipzig, that without her had no longer a charm for him, gave up his occupation, and retired into the above. mentioned quiet abode at Dresden.

He had, it is true, other children, but with this one, part of his life seemed to have departed. Marie, his daughter by a second marriage, possessed a fine execution, acquired under the direction of her half-brother, Alwin; later her father himself took charge of her musical education, and with her also gave proof of his great gift as Maestro; but not being a Prometheus, even he could not impart to her cold nature the depth of soul which spoke to the hearer from every tone produced by Clara's fingers, and her excellent technical finish never excited the enthusiasm that followed Clara's steps.

And what became of Wieck's method? Has it been lost to the world since his death? Not entirely; for, although he himself did not publish it, it did not die with him. His son Alwin, who has inherited his father's love of and talent for teaching, collected, with the help of his sister Clara, after their father's death, the necessary materials, and compiled a work which lays open the progressive method of instruction followed by the celebrated master, and makes it intelligible to all. They laid it, as it were, as a wreath of unfading forget-me-nots, over his grave, sure of the benefit it would bring to the instructing element of the musical world.

AMELY BÖLTE.

HORACE:

A NOVEL.

BY MATTHEW SETON,

Author of "Sidera," "The Love of Lennox," etc.

CHAPTER V.

PERE ET FILS.

FAL.—What said Master Dombledon about the satin for my short cloa and slops?

PAGE.—He said sir, you should procure him better assurance than Bardolph; he liked not the security.

Henry IV., Part II.

THE master of 39, Dover Street, was, on Monday morning in the end of January, 1859, in a state of evident mental discomfort. He sat in his library, turning over a heap of papers which bore tha suspicious aspect which we are wont to associate with tradesmen's bills. He seized first one and then another, surveyed the totals through his eye-glass, and flung them down in disgust. Then he rose from his seat and paced up and down the room, muttering and growling, and sometimes snatching up one of the detested documents as he passed the table, which, after squeezing in his hand, he flung back again to its place. As length he stopped suddenly and rung the bell violently.

"Is Mr. Grantley down yet, do you know, Bloxam?" he asked, as the butler appeared.

"Yes, sir, he is. He has been down this last ten minutes, and is taking his breakfast."

"Tell him I wish to see him the moment he has finished."

Albeit ten minutes afterwards the young gentleman presented himself before his father. Mr. Winn was still pacing up and down the room.

"Bloxam told me you wished to see me before I went out."

"This is a pretty time to be taking your breakfast at," began Mr. Winn, looking at his watch. "Five minutes to twelve! But I suppose you consider it fashionable?"

"If that was all you wanted to see me about, I may as well go," said the son, turning to the door.

"No, sir, it wasn't all," thundered his father. 'And I have a right to expect something more respectful in your behaviour to me than you are in the habit of showing. Suppose it *was* all, what

right have you, pray, to answer me with that insolent manner? But it is not all, and, therefore, just be so good as to sit down. Do you see all those papers?"

"I do; and without the aid of a double magnifier."

"And can you guess what they are?"

"Well, I should say they look uncommonly like duns."

"Yes, they are *duns*, as you call them. In other words, *bills*. Bills from every quarter of the town, bills for every conceivable kind of thing, bills of, God knows how long standing; and everyone of them bills of *yours*."

"In that case, I think they might have been sent to *me*," said the young gentleman.

"Sent to *you!*" cried his father. "Do you mean to tell me, sir, that they have not been sent to you over and over again, until, tired of having no notice taken of them, these several tradespeople have given up in desperation and begun to dun *me*? But why have they not been paid; that's what I want to know? What in the name of creation do you do with the allowance I make you? Why, not *one* of these bills has been settled, and upon my word, they seem positively uncountable. Just look at that pile!"

"Yes, by Jove; it scarcely contributes to the tidiness of the table," said Grantley, with a slight smile, which was more like a sneer. "The postman has had a small armful this morning, I should say."

"And for what have they been incurred?" continued his father, clutching hold of one of the offensive documents, and putting his eyeglass to his eye. "For simply the greatest rubbish conceivable! The wildest extravagance possible might have some shadow of excuse if the money was spent upon something that had any sense in it. But look at this! A tailor's bill for thirty pounds, actually for thirty pounds; and for what? A complete yachting dress; a complete shooting suit; and a complete cricketing dress. Now, sir, I should like to know when you yacht, or shoot, or play cricket?"

"I can't say that at present. I go in for any of these lively pastimes; but, in my opinion, one should be prepared for unforeseen events."

"Anything but *coming* ones in your case, I should say," sneered Mr. Winn. "As to yachting, you never go half a mile out to sea but you are sick the whole time; as to shooting, I doubt if you ever handled a gun in your life; and as to cricketing, you never seemed to care for it, even when you were at school. Eternal smoking, unlimited drinking, and everlasting billiards, seems to be about the sum-total of *your* accomplishments."

"Devilish complimentary, anyhow!" put in the young gentleman.

"Then, look at this," continued his father; a hairdresser's bill nearly the length of my arm! And what does it all consist of? Pomatums and pomades without end; scents and bouquets innumerable; washes with ridiculous Greek names; and—can one really believe one's eyes?—boxes of violet powder! Now, what the deuce can any man, calling himself a man, want with violet powder? Fribble! milksop! coxcomb!"

"*De gustibus non est disputandum*, I should say," remarked Grantley. "Thanks for all those elegant epithets. I fancy the vocabulary must soon be exhausted. Only, don't swear, I entreat you; because I am afraid that neither my mother nor Exeter Hall would approve of such forcible language."

"*Swear*, sir! How dare you insinuate anything about swearing?" cried Mr. Winn, getting very red in the face; for he felt all that his son's sneer implied.

"I fancied you dropped a mild expletive in the shape of a 'what the deuce,'" said Grantley; and I was taught to believe that that was swearing. That is all."

"You're enough to make the veriest saint swear," muttered Mr. Winn. "I'm glad to see, sir, you haven't quite forgotten all you have learned at school," he went on, aloud. "Considering the way in which you spent your time there, a Latin quotation would have been the last thing I should have dreamed of your producing. But I congratulate you on its aptness. However, if you have a fancy for saturating that elegant person of yours with violet powder, all I can say is, don't expect me to pay for it."

"I can't say that I ever did," said the exquisite, surveying the manifold rings on his thready-looking fingers; "but at the same time I hope I may remark that one don't soak oneself with powder as one does a sponge with water; not quite."

"And if you can pay, why don't you?" roared his father. "Why don't you settle every one of 'em, and have done with 'em?"

"The sufficient, if not the sole, reason being—a considerably exhausted exchequer," said the spendthrift, tapping the breast pocket of his coat. "Till next quarter-day comes round, my creditors must have the goodness to wait."

"It's my opinion they'll have to wait a good deal longer than that if they have only you to depend on," said his father. "But, look here, Grantley, I must put a stop to all this kind of thing once for all, I must put a stop to it. I'm not going to be plagued continually by bills of yours being sent in to me. I don't say that I am not able to pay them if I choose; but I don't choose. You get your hundred pounds paid punctually every quarter, and I don't consider that an unjust allowance. You live with us, and consequently have not to spend a farthing in board or lodging; in

fact, you are free to spend every penny I give you in dress and amusement. Yon know that, over and above that, I have paid bills for you; and I have a strong suspicion that you contrive to get money out of your mother, besides. It seems to me that, if anything, you have grown more reckless since we heard of the birth of your cousin. Perhaps I was not quite agreeably surprised myself, when your uncle took it into his head to marry, and hardly felt as cordial as I should have done, when his boy was born; but, after all, every man has a right to please himself, and nobody has any excuse for quarrelling with him because he has an heir."

"I don't see it," said the disappointed heir-expectant. "It seems devilish hard that a fellow should have his reasonable expectations blasted all of a sudden, because his uncle, after giving all the world to believe he was an incorrigible stick-in-the-mud, takes it into his head one fine day to go and commit matrimony; and then, not content with that, lulls people into false security until he thinks proper to produce a kid."

"Your phraseology is certainly getting refined, Grantley," said his father. "'*Stick-in-the-mud*,' I persume, means bachelor."

"Undoubtedly so—in *my* lingo!" said Mr. Grantley.

"I can only congratulate myself that *your* lingo, as you call it, is not *mine*," said his father, taking up a position with his back to the fire, not uncommon with gentlemen. "But to proceed, I always warned you not to indulge these expectations, as you call them, but advised you rather, if you wanted so desperately to be a rich man, to do as others have done before—get into some employment in which you might have some chance of coining money. After all, suppose your uncle had never married, it didn't follow that you would have survived him. As you know well enough, he is a hale and vigorous man, and may live for years after you have been nailed up in your coffin. Then you seem to forget that before *you* there might have come *me;* and do I look a man so particularly unlikely to live to a ripe old age?"

"Well, I wouldn't insure you for a century if you continue to take such enormous doses of May-meetings, prayer-meetings, old Fire and Birmstone's sermons, and all the other favourite prescriptions which my mother considers necessary for making life enjoyable."

Mr. Winn winced palpably, but, at the same time, turned his head away to conceal a smile.

"Humph," he said, turning round again, and speaking with a queer kind of perplexity, as if he felt his son had hit him in a vulnerable part. "I don't know. Perhaps too much devotion to the forms of religion *does* occasionally produce a depression which scarcely to prolong vitality; but, of course, your mother knows

much better about these things than I do." Then, his eyes falling on the formidable heap of paper which lay under his nose, he seemed recalled to the late cause of his indignation, and continued: "Now, understand me clearly, Grantley, whether you have any ambition to join a profession or not, my mind is made up. I'm tired of seeing you idling about, spending your time in nothing but spending money, and I mean that you should turn your mind to something. You can't justly accuse me of ever having behaved harshly to you. When you left school, you demurred to proceeding to a university, and I never coerced you. You showed no inclination for the army, the navy, the bar, the medical profession, or any branch of the Civil Service; in fact, you seemed to think that, as you were one day going to be a baronet with an income of fifteen thousand a year, it was hardly worth your while to be anything more than a drone, a spendthrift, and what, I suppose, you would call a man-about-town. Well, I say there must be an end of this. As you don't take apparently to any of the learned professions, try something else. Your mother, I may tell you, has influence enough with her relations to get you into a counting-house, a bank, or a brewery. In any of these departments you will have an opportunity of making a fortune; but, for my own part, I should strongly recommend the bank. However, I give you a month to decide."

"And suppose I decide on nothing?" said Grantley.

"Why, then I will stop your allowance, and you will have to shift for yourself as best you can. Now, with regard to all that accumulation of waste and disgrace," he continued, pointing to the heap of bills, "I will tell you what I am going to do. I will pay a certain portion of them myself, and will deduct what is needed for the rest out of your next quarter. But this is the last time; so you have full warning. At the same time, I mean to write to all these people, and make them understand that henceforth I don't intend to be responsible for one farthing of debt which you may contract. Let me tell you, though, that these bills are not the only thing, or even the most serious thing. I have reason to believe you have been raising the wind, as I suppose you would say, by applying to some of those astonishing money-lenders. Is that so?"

"I believe the tribe of Judah *have* got a little of my paper floating about among them," said Mr. Grantley, affecting great sangfroid, but looking visibly discomposed. "How did you get wind of that?"

"That's neither here nor there," said his father. "But this I may tell you, Grantley. If ever you get into trouble through money-lenders don't expect me to get you out of it."

"Is that all, in the meantime?" asked the scapegrace.

"One thing more, and that certainly not the least," said Mr. Winn, looking his son through and through, and coming close up to him as he was opening the door; "it has been hinted to me——" The rest he whispered in the young man's ear.

"The d——dest lie out?" cried his son, leaving the room and banging the door after him; while his usually pale face turned so white that his mother, who was waiting for him in the lobby, thought he was going to faint.

CHAPTER VI.

MERE ET FILS.

"That such a crafty devil as his mother should yield the world this ass!"
Cymbeline.

"GRANTLEY, what *is* the matter? You *are* so white!"

"My father—damn him!"

"Oh, my dear, whatever you do, don't swear! You don't know how it horrifies me," cried his mamma. "When I think of the fearful doom that is foretold of those who do such things, it makes me quite tremble. And consider the example to the servants who may overhear you, not to speak of your sisters, any one of whom might be within earshot."

"As for the slavies," said her son, with a laugh, "you don't mean to say, mother, you are so simple as to believe that Bloxham never indulges in the ungodly luxury of an oath?"

"I should be very sorry to believe anything of the kind, considering the example which he has set before him in this house," said Mrs. Winn, with considerable self-complacency. "All I can say is, that if I were to discover anything of the sort, I should at once acquaint your father with the fact, and have him discharged."

"I fancy swearing isn't the very best form out for a fellow, especially in the presence of a lady," said Grantley, with a jaunty, affected air, which fully justified the character of fribble and coxcomb which his father had given him. "But, really, the governor quite surpassed himself."

"What has he been saying, Grantley?"

"Oh, can't you imagine? There is only one subject we have in common—those everlasting bills. Then, of course, a sermon, the length and solemnity of which would have done credit to your particular friend, Mr. Hockstock."

"Ah, dear Grantley, I could think of you with far less anxiety if you could be persuaded to regard with some love and reverence

my dear old friend, Mr. Hockstock. Could you but be induced to return to his ministrations, what an inexpressible comfort it would be to me!"

"That's about as likely, my dear mother, as that pigs will fly without wings. No, no; I have bid adieu to the zealous Hocky Wocky for *this* life, at any rate; and to all of his kidney, I hope."

"For *this* life," said his mother, with emphasis. "If only, dear Grantley, you would sometimes reflect on the great Hereafter."

"To say the truth, I've a great deal too much to think about with the gigantic Present," said her son. "My debts, for example."

"I can't help thinking your father is in some degree right when he complains of your extravagance, Grantley. It does seem to me as if you scatter money about in a very reckless way, and run into debt to a needless and terrible extent. If one could only get you to look upon money as a *talent* for which each and all of us must one day give an account."

"In that case, I fancy, my particular ledger will be found in a somewhat complicated and unsatisfactory condition."

"Oh, don't make a jest of so serious a matter, dear Grantley!" said Mrs. Winn, imploringly. "And a most serious matter it is; for I don't think I know of any responsibility more grave than that which attaches to the outlay and employment of money. In the first place——"

"Upon my word, mother," interrupted Grantley, "if I am only to stand here and listen to you preaching for the next half-hour, I shall be off—and pretty sharp, too." He took down his hat, and was going to open the house-door, when Mrs. Winn laid her hand on his arm.

"One moment, Grantley, dear. Do those bills about which you and your father have had so much altercation amount to very much?"

"A pretty tidy sum, I fancy, on the whole; anyhow, far beyond what *my* present humble resources can liquidate."

"Then, what do you mean to do about them?"

"Oh, they don't trouble me much, I assure you, especially now that the governor has taken them in hand, and is going to manage things in his own way."

"What is your father going to do?"

"Well, as far as I could make out, he means to settle some of 'em himself, and pay the rest out of my next quarter, which I consider deuced——I beg your pardon, mother—I mean, abominably unfair."

"Surely, Grantley, it is rather a generous arrangement on your father's part?"

"What! when there yet wants a week to next pay-day, and I'm so hard-up for a little ready cash, as it is, that I'm almost reduced to the degrading necessity of taking an omnibus! At that rate, what is a poor beggar to do? Can anyone wonder he tumbles head and ears into debt almost before you can say 'Jack Robinson?'"

"If you really are reduced so low as you say, and want a little ready money to go on with, I think I can help you in the meantime," said his mother, taking out her purse and giving him a five-pound note. "But do, dear Grantley, I entreat you, try and look upon even this comparatively small sum with some sense of responsibility, and do not fritter and squander it wholly away on unprofitable indulgence. I might give you more, but I have so many calls on my purse at this moment, from objects which are really in pressing need of assistance; and only this morning I paid up my annual subscription to the 'Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.'"

Grantley took the note, kissed his mother on the forehead, and fervently wished that all the societies in creation could empty their funds into his own private exchequer; after which they could al go to the torrid zone if they liked.

"Were these bills the only matter your father spoke to you about, Grantley?" asked his mother, a little inquisitively.

"Why, of course, mother. What else could he talk about?" said the young gentleman vehemently, and getting a little red.

"I thought, perhaps, he might have touched on something else; on something more irritating, I mean. You seemed so *frightfully* pale when you came out."

"I'm not surprised at that. It would have turned any fellow the colour of a table-napkin to have sat as long as I did, listening to his infernal dissertation. For one thing, jawing away about my looking forward to succeeding the old cock down in Warwickshire; in other words, my uxorious and highly inconvenient uncle. Why shouldn't I have looked forward? Any other fellow would have done it in my case, and I daresay he was looking forward himself, though he thinks it best now to appear very philosophical. I consider it was a confoundedly mean thing of Uncle Harold to go and marry as he did—(a fellow with one arm, too); and as for that little beggar who has popped his beastly little nose on the scene, I wish some one would kindly garrot him."

"Hush! dear Grantley. It quite makes me shudder when I hear you talk like that," said the ferocious young gentleman's mamma, with a shiver. "I feel that it cannot be right. At the same time, my dear boy, you know how fully I sympathise with you in this matter. To say the least of it, it seemed to me

extremely thoughtless and inconsiderate, not to say eccentric, for your uncle to have done as he has done. It was looked upon generally, and as a matter of course, and even by your uncle himself—for he mentioned the subject to me several times—that one day, if it pleased God to spare you, you would succeed to the title and estates. As to the birth of your cousin," continued the lady, turning her eyes in a very affecting manner up to the chandelier above her, "although under the circumstances it is an occurrence naturally a little trying to one's feelings, we must remember that *such* things are in the inscrutable but wise ordering of One who *always* knows what is right and best. Yes," she went on, still eyeing the chandelier, "who *always* knows what is good and best for us. But I do trust and pray most fervently, now that dear Evelyn has had the desire of her heart gratified, that she will realise to some extent the vast responsibility with which she is entrusted, and will endeavour to train her child in a way other than that which I fear your uncle would be inclined himself to uggest or encourage."

"Oh! hang his training!" said Master Horace's affectionate cousin. "It seems to me it would spare everybody a great deal of trouble if he was not trained at all; in other words, if a good-natured croup, or convulsion, or one of those ills which kids are heir to would take the training on itself, and train the little beggar off to another sphere. Don't somebody say something about the gods loving those who die young? Well, it's to be hoped the authorities up there," said the young gentleman, pointing up to the chandelier, "will get up a violent affection for my cousin, at their earliest possible convenience."

"Oh, Grantley, do not trifle with sacred subjects, I entreat of you!" cried his mamma in great distress. "But tell me, my dear boy, did your father make any reference to the subject of the choice of a profession?"

"You may be sure he did that. He's got it on the brain, I do believe. His notion now is that I ought to become a banker, or a brewer, or a tallow-chandler, or something of that kind. He said I was to refer to you upon that subject."

"The idea is not at all a bad one, Grantley," said his mother, thoughtfully. A word from me to your uncle Richard or your uncle Mark would, I know, get you at once either into the brewery or the bank. Of course, if you took a little trouble to please them, and everything went smooth, they would ultimately take you into partnership. As probably you are aware, my dear boy, there are very large fortunes to be made sometimes, both in banking and brewing; and though I trust I am not one of those who set their hearts upon riches for their own sake, I cannot be

blind to the fact of how *very* powerful an instrument for good, and for bringing glory to God, they may be in the hands of a thoroughly zealous and conscientious person. Shall I write to either of your uncles? I could do so to-day, if you liked.

"I don't at all object to the idea of a lot of coin rolling into one's pocket," said Grantley; "and no doubt it's not bad fun when once you've got to be a partner, especially a sleeping partner, which would just suit me; but how about the commencement? Wont it be precious stupid work and precious little pay?"

"As to that, I can't speak with any certainty," said his mother; "but I will take care to find out all about it from your uncles."

"It sounds, don't you know, the sort of thing to bore a fellow. One thinks immediately of a stuffy office, with an awfully high three-legged stool, and a lot of those elegantly-bound volumes they call ledgers."

"I should hope you would not be bored," said his mother. "But, at any rate, do not throw the thing overboard, as if it was worth no consideration, Grantley."

"I've been thinking of something else, mother," said the young gentleman, slowly.

"Ah! The army, perhaps?"

"Oh, dear, no. I've no idea of being made made food for powder, to please anybody; nor yet of being bored to death in a barracks. *That's* not my game."

"What, then, Grantley?"

"An heiress," said Grantley, looking at his mother with a highly self-approving smile.

"An heiress! But, my dear boy, where will you find one?"

"I've done that already, mother."

"You don't mean to say so, Grantley? And who is she, pray?"

"Ah, that is my secret."

"But are you sure, my dear boy, that the young lady, whoever she is, is really possessed of a fortune?"

"Sure as I am of salvation," said Mr. Grantley, profanely, while his mother shivered. "Her fortune's a very pretty one, I can tell you."

"I hope she is fully your equal in social position," said his mamma, anxiously.

"Oh, quite!"

"I mean, no monied *parvenu*."

"Decidedly not. I would bet a pony her blood's as blue as—as—confound it all, what shall I say?—as an old maid's nose in winter."

"Well, that is a comfort, so far," said his mamma, with a sigh

of relief. "But, Grantley, do you really think your chances of success with this interesting unknown are favourable?"

"Quite as much so, I fancy, as those of any other of her admirers. By Jove, perhaps I ought to say, a vast deal more so. I don't think I'm quite a gorilla, eh?" said the young gentleman, looking down at his boots with an air of ineffable complacency, and tapping the calf of his right leg with his clouded cane.

"A gorilla, my dear Grantley! Why, not exactly. I should say in point of mere *looks*—although it may be a little maternal pride on my part—in point of mere looks, I should say you could hold your own with the best," said the mamma, gazing with admiration on her son. "There is one thing, my dear boy, which, above all things, I must be allowed to hope, and that is, that the young lady has fixed Christian principles."

"Nothing to the contrary, anyhow, as far as I know," said Grantley, laughing.

"And you wont let me into your secret?" said his mother. "You wont tell me her name?"

"Not just yet, mother. But I promise you shall be the first to hear of my engagement It will knock the brewing and banking business on the head, I flatter myself."

At this moment Harriet peeped her head over the bannisters, and called from the top of the stairs:

"Oh, are you there, 'ma? Maria and I want to know if you are going to take us to the Monday Pop. this afternoon?"

"Yes, my dear; I have ordered the carriage at a little before three. You will be at home for dinner, my dear boy?" she continued, as her promising son opened the door.

"Isn't old Hocky-Wocky and a lot of his fraternity coming to dinner, and afterwards going to tell stories about the niggers?"

"We certainly expect Mr. Hockstock and a few other Christian friends, some of whom, I hope, will give us some interesting accounts of the progress of mission work in the South Sea Islands," said his mamma earnestly.

"The South Sea bubble! I thought it had burst long ago. That's enough for me; I'm off," said Mr. Grantley, making his exit. "My love to Hocky-Wocky and Co.," he cried, looking back and kissing his hand. "Ta, ta."

"He certainly looks very handsome to-day," said his mamma to herself, as she looked after him for a moment. "I hope this plan of his about the heiress is really serious. It might be the m of him, please God. Who can she be, I wonder! *If* an all-wise Providence were *yet* to ordain that my boy should be Sir Grantley Winn, how happy I should be! Surely, surely no one could adorn the position so well as he?" And then the doting, pious, worldly creature shut-to the hall-door and went up-stair.

CHAPTER VII.

IN WHICH MR. GRANTLEY WINN SHOWS HIMSELF GENEROUS.

"When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy?
What art can wash her guilt away?"

Goldsmith.

IT must be apparent to the reader that Mrs. Winn's opinion of her son's looks is of a very favourable character, whatever may be that of other people. But, as it is no uncommon thing for certain mammas to fancy, and even most conscientiously to believe, that all their geese are swans, it may be well perhaps to examine a little more closely this particular young gentleman. Is Mr. Grantley Winn, as regards his personal attractions, a goose or a swan? Opinions on the question were certainly divided. Many of his friends and acquaintances held with his mamma that the young gentleman was an exceedingly handsome young gentleman; and some of them went so far as to say that among the gentle sex his fascinations were calculated to be even dangerous. The light coquette, Miss Julia Darby, and the incorrigible flirt, Miss Arabella Warboys, spoke with enthusiasm of his regular features and his lovely complexion.

"Mr. Grantley Winn's complexion is one that any girl might envy," said Miss Darby. "I often envy it myself."

"Mr. Grantley Winn has such sweet features—now, don't you think so?" said Miss Warboys. The latter young lady also commended Mr. Winn's elegant figure: "He is not very tall, you know, but then he is so very well made," she remarked.

Now, it would be unfair to deny that Mr. Winn's features were regular, and that he possessed a kind of pink-and-white complexion. In so far as one of those waxen heads which one sees exhibited in a hairdresser's window is deserving of admiration, in so far was Grantley's face good-looking and attractive. What he had of physical beauty, in fact, resembled that of a doll. To those who look for something deeper than regular outline and glittering surface his face wanted two indispensible requisites—shade and expression; and that, again, amounts to saying that it wanted what we are accustomed to call character. His hair was flaxen in colour, and very scanty; his eyebrows were of the same tone, and still more scanty—in fact, it was a question whether he had anything which could properly be called an eyebrow at all. His eyes were pale blue, and very prominent; and what expression they had was intellectually dull, but sensually sug-

gestive. His mouth, though even, and not large, was purely animal in character; and the lips were gross, with that unnaturally pink tinge upon them which is a common accompaniment of coarse dissipation. In a word, notwithstanding its regularity of feature and rose-pink hue, and the strong commendations of Miss Darby and Miss Warboys, Mr. Winn's face would have been interpreted by the practised physiognomist as that of a merely coarse and commonplace voluptuary, in which it were vain to look for any vestige of that divinity of expression, and illumination of thought, which often cancels vice, and sometimes glorifies profligacy. His figure confirmed Miss Warboy's verdict to a certain extent; but there was a nameless look of artificiality and exaggeration about it which suggested the prints in a tailor's specimens of the latest fashions, aud which imparted a general impression of snobbishness rather than of gentility. As he swaggered down Dover Street, towards Piccadilly, it was impossible not to perceive that he was a young gentleman who cherished extremely optimist views about himself. When he reached Piccadilly he turned to his right, and crossed over when he came to St. James's Street, down which he proceeded. Near the end of that street, he turned into a fashionable tailor's, and ordered several suits of clothes, which probably he needed as much as did the dome of St. Paul's, and which added another recruit to the formidable regiment then quartered in his father's library. "What the devil matters one more or less," he muttered, as he came out. "I can pay 'em all with the Honourable Miss Thingammygig's coin." As he entered Pall Mall, and turned his face in the direction of Charing Cross, he drew a letter from his pocket, and read it as he walked on. It was without any address or date, and ran as follows:—

MR. GRANTLEY.—Sir,

I write these few lines to remind you what you promised to me just before I was leaving London. You knew how I was sitewated at that time, and what would happen in corse of time after I got home. You said when it came to pass you would send me a little money, so as I miten't be to much of a drag on mother, which it is very severe on her now there is too to provide for besides herself and grandmother. The baby was born more than a month ago, but I have never breethed the name of its father to any wun, not even to mother, nor never will if it is to bring trubble on you and your famly, which is the last thing from my hart, thow I am almost broken-harted myself to think there should be such a stain on my caracter. But oh Grantley dear do think of my sitewation, and of the infant I have to nurse and care for, and of all the trubble I have to bear with everybody about the place nowing whats hapened, and mother always at me to tell her everything, and the time last year before I left Lover Street and you used to tell me you loved me, and said I shude always be your dear Patty. Oh Mr. Grantley do think upon it all and help me and little Fanny as you promised to. This is the third letter Ive sent you, but not heering agayn in reply, I fear the others

must have misscared somehow, and so send another which I hope you will anser soon and not be ofended by me aplying for a small sum as you promised to help me when the child was born. and am yours respeckfully, M. W.

P.S.—If you was kindly to forward a post ofice horder to the post ofice in the vilage I cud call for it when I went to shop for mother.

Having read the letter over twice to the accompaniment of several oaths, he tore it into little scraps, which he dropped down the grating of an area. "This is the third of her infernal letters," he muttered. "What a nuisance these women are when they begin to come the sentimental over a fellow! As if her mother couldn't keep the whole lot of 'em, as easily as knit a stocking! What else has the old woman to do with her wages! And then that confounded kid! If she'd done as I advised there would never have been one. D——it all! how can she expect me to fork out for the little beast when I've hardly a copper left for myself? I'm glad, though, she's had the good sense and the pluck to keep mum about my part in the business; that's one thing in her favour; and, perhaps, it will be good policy if I were to send her a little cash in the meantime. If I don't she will be certain to plague me with more letters, and may get out of patience at last and split. That wont suit my book by a long chalk; not exactly. But what can I afford her? Let me see. There's the mum's fiver, and six quid and a half of my own; that makes eleven ten altogether, not counting two or three sixpences and an odd halfpenny. Now, I've a good deal to do on that to-day, besides stretching it out for the next week unless I contrive to get some more out of the mum. First of all, I've to stand Fred a dinner; then there'll be the theatre or a music-hall after; and then knocking about somewhere after that. That'll walk off with a considerable amount, I fancy. Precious little to spare for the virtuous lady down in the country, it strikes me," he went on with a mocking grin which seemed to reveal all the heartless cynicism that lay hidden in his vitiated nature. "Let me see: I wonder if I and Fred could manage anything by going among the Israelites. If we could only raise the smallest loan, I might tide over till next quarter-day. By Jove, when it does come there's that infernal deduction of the governor's. Oh, hang it all! Fred and I *must* do something. As for the girl, I'll send her the odd half-quid; but, by G—! if she's not content with that, and bothers me with any more letters, I'll send her something she wont find so agreeable, and that's a piece of my mind." He turned into a Post Office in Charing Cross and got an order for ten shillings; then he went to the table where the telegraph forms lay, tore a piece of paper out of his pocket-book, and wrote on it:

"I enclose an order for half-a-quid; and don't bother me with any more

letters, or I swear I'll never have another word to say to you. I'm always short myself, and can't do it.—G.W."

That was all. To inscribe one word of tenderness, to give one smallest hint of sympathy with her, who was bearing as best she might the burden that himself had laid upon her—those strokes of the pen, which might have raised her in her own self-respect, and been a more acceptable balm even than the paltry pittance enclosed —it could not occur to him to make. What the heart feels the head will quickly think of; but if that fountain has been dried up by the fashions of the world, what then? He bought a stamped envelope, addressed it to the village of Stradford, in Warwickshire, enclosed the order and note, and put it in the letter-box. "That business is off my hands, anyhow," he said to himself, as he turned into Spring Gardens, close by where Fred lived. "Deuced lucky, though, I'm not of age. The little fool might have brought a B.O.P. And very possibly he really believed that he had just performed a very generous and humane action. This was the young gentleman whose proud and evangelical mamma considered would adorn the position of a baronet with fifteen thousand a-year, better than anybody else. Perhaps Martha Wren would have thought so, too, after the receipt of that munificent order and consolatory message!

CHAPTER VIII.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER.

"Dis moi qui tu hante, je te dirai que tu es."—*French saying.*

Mr. Grantley Winn knocked at the door of a house in Spring Gardens belonging to that particular row which turns its back on Charing Cross. Finding from the servant that Mr. Frederick Grossmith was at home, he mounted to the second floor and entered a small sitting-room, out of which opened a bedroom, the door of which was closed. The state of the room afforded a very good idea of the tastes and habits of its owner. On the table, which stood in the middle, half covered with a dirty cloth, were a half-empty bottle of brandy, a wine glass and a tumbler, a couple of empty soda-water bottles, a long meerchaum pipe, and the stump of a cigar. Beside one of the table's legs a small pool of spilt liquor still glittered. In the fender lay a kettle prostrate on its side with its lid removed some inches from it. The fire was very low and would soon be out if revival measures were not promptly taken. On the undusted mantle-piece, amid some tawdry ornaments, stood several dirty jars of tobacco. The pervading atmosphere of the apartment was a delicate combination of brandy

and smoke. Grantley sniffed the air with some signs of disgust when he entered, although it is probable that it was no stranger to him, and that he may, during what are called "the small hours," sometimes have helped to produce it. His first act was to rap violently with his cane at the door of the bedroom.

"Hey, old boy, aren't you up yet?" he shouted.

A half-smothered reply came from a voice within, which sounded like:

"Eh?—what?—devil!—oh!—ah!—you, Winn?"

Then there was an enormous yawn, and then some further speech which was quite unintelligible, because it was clear that the speaker had put his head under the blankets. Grantley once more battered at the door with his cane and roared:

"Fred, get up, you lazy devil! Have you the remotest idea what o'clock it is? Get up, I say; I want particularly to speak to you."

Mr. Grossmith here evidently made an effort, and brought his head out of the blankets.

"Hear you, Winn, well enough without all that infernal hammering!" he cried. "Time be blowed. Got the devil's own headache; hot one, of course, or it wouldn't be his. Want me to get up? All right; be with you in a giffy. Make yourself at home. Find weeds and baccy on the chimney-piece."

"Shall I order breakfast, old fellow?" roared Grantley.

"Do. Coffee and kidney."

Mr. Winn first dashed half a scuttle-full of coals on the fire, and then rung the bell. The young woman who had opened the door to him presented herself, after some considerable interval.

"Please, sir, did you ring?"

"Yes, of course I did; and a precious time you have taken to answer the bell."

"You see, sir, I was cooking the dinner for the down-stairs lodger, and couldn't attend to you at the minute, else the chops might have burned," said the maid-of-all-work.

"Well, let 'em burn. Who the devil cares? As for the down-stairs lodger, he may be d——d. Some howling snob, I suppose. But just you mind and don't keep gentlemen waiting another time, and look sharp and get Mr. Grossmith's breakfast; he ordered coffee and a kidney. And, I say, just make your face a degree more respectable before you come up. At present it looks as if it had lately been up the chimney."

"Lor'!" exclaimed the maid-of-all-work, attempting to wipe off a large black smudge from her nose with an apron nearly as dirty; "it's been a smut out of the kitchen fire."

Mr. Grantley sat down and lighted a cigar; and when the maid-of-all-work reappeared with the breakfast, he amused himself by bullying her. In due time the door of the bedroom opened, and the figure of Mr. Frederick Grossmith presented itself. It was a figure which you might say had encased itself in fat, of a very flabby description. The face, which was in shape like a three-quarter moon, was one mass of flabbiness and puffiness; the small eyes were so buried by fat eyelids that they looked more like two balls scooped in the face; and the cheeks, which were highly bloated, hung like two inflated bags. The trunk, arms, and legs, were all equally remarkable for an enormous development of fat of an unhealthy and flabby character. Mr. Grossmith looked, indeed, a fitting god for the small temple of dissipation in which he was installed.

As he entered the room, the contrast between Mr. Grossmith's exuberant physique, and that of the attenuated Mr. Grantley Winn, was very marked. They were admirable specimens of rakes of a different type. Mr. Grossmith's first act was to take up one of his meerchaums, fill it with tobacco out of one of the jars on the mantle-piece and light it. Then he opened a bottle of soda water, poured it into a tumbler, emptied a glass of brandy on top of it, and drank it off in two or three gulps. This being accomplished, he smacked his pendulous lips, and sat down to his breakfast with his pipe still in his mouth.

"Nothing like a brandy and soda for dissipating a headache," he remarked, "and a pipe. Hair of the dog that bit you."

Mr. Grossmith, from being so very fat, seemed generally to deem it an economy of energy to speak as far as possible in abbreviated sentences.

"On the loose last night—eh, old fellow?" said Mr. Winn, grinning.

"Canterbury. Devilish slow. Infernal liquor."

"And too much of it—eh, my boy?"

Mr. Grossmith made no answer to this, but lazily puffed his pipe, lazily stirred his coffee, and made a lazy bite at his kidney.

"What's the particular affair you've come about, old boy?" he asked, presently. "Old story? Pecuniary embarrassments?"

"You've hit it, Fred. A rapidly decaying exchequer, and reimbursements only visible in the distant future."

"My case to a T. Don't your governor dub up?"

"Oh, yes, to be sure; *most* lavishly. You should just have seen him this morning in his tantrums; never met with such a liberally-disposed parent in my life," said Mr. Grantley, with dreadful irony. "If you mean that the paternal hand is shortly going to make a dive into *my* pocket, you may be a little nearer

the mark." He then recounted the events of the morning; but omitting the transmission of the half-sovereign and letter to Martha.

"Deuced hard lines!" observed Fred, at the end of the recital. "What do you mean to do?"

"Do a bill if I can."

"But you can't, you know. Impossible. Too much of our paper flying about already. I've a bill myself, must be taken up in the next ten days; and you've one due in a fortnight. It's no good going any more to Shultzer, nor yet to Salamons; they'd have nothing to say to us. Fact is, I'd prefer keeping out of their way as much as possible at present. Besides, who could we get to sign?"

"Couldn't you persuade young, what's his name?—Chiffin?" suggested Grantley.

"Chiffin be d——d!" remarked Grossmith, as he lazily replenished his pipe. "The young fool's getting nervous already about a bill he signed for me two months ago. Plagues me with it every time I meet him. *He's* no good."

"Why not do a bill together—eh, old man?" said Grantley.

"And which of us is to take it up, my fine fellow?" said Fred, giving a sly look out of one of his embedded eyes.

"Oh, a joint concern, of course. Equal liability, mutual confidence, and that kind of thing, you know," said Grantley, in an off-handed tone; but reddening somewhat.

"Don't quite see it, my boy. Security bad; risk undoubted."

"Then, d——n it, I'm floored," said Grantley. After this they left the subject for the time, and engaged in the interesting, cheerful, and amusing style of conversation which is so common among men of their type. Mr. Grossmith informed Mr. Winn that on the preceding night he had played billiards for so many hours, and had made some wonderful canons; that he had engaged a little in pool and won a few shillings; and that he had drunk so many soda-and-brandies. Mr. Winn told Mr. Grossmith that he had been to a ball, and danced with "a devilish pretty girl, by Jove!" and Mr. Grossmith remarked that he thought he had once heard her mentioned by Chiffin—believed Chiffin was sweet on her. Mr. Winn then declared he had fallen in with another "devilish nice little girl" in a certain glove-shop in the Burlington Arcade; and then he wandered away to the heiress, whom he proposed to carry off shortly. Mr. Grossmith sympathised about the heiress very much; and thought that he ought to look out for the same kind of article one of these days; and finally he informed Mr. Winn that he had stumbled on a new restaurant where "you can get a develish good dinner and devilish fine liquor." At this point Mr. Grossmith had finished his breakfast, having eaten half his kidney and about a third of a hot roll.

"What are you going to do to-day, Grant?" he asked, pushing the table away from him.

"Well, you know, I thought of knocking about somewhere till five o'clock, when I mean to drop in at Lady Rumford's, and do a little business with my heiress. It s the best time, you know, for making sure of catching her at home; the women never miss their five-o'clock cup, if they can help it."

"What's her name again?" asked Fred. Honourable something, aint she?"

"Yes. Hon. Mildred Moorhouse, only child of Lord Banks. It's quite a recent creation, you know. The old boy spent a fortune in backing up Liberal candidates, and standing himself for some ungodly place in Yorkshire, which he managed to get in for at last; so just before the last Ministry fell he reaped his reward, and now signs his letters, 'Truly yours, Banks,' instead of 'Joseph Moorhouse.'"

"Much coin?" asked Fred.

"A pot of money, they say. It's certain his daughter wont come in for less than a quarter of a million. I'm told the old fellow made it all in calico or flannel, or some civilised fabric of that kind."

"Supporters of the new baronial shield—Spinning jenny rampant, flannel petticoat fluttering. Crest—Richly laced night-gown, surmounted by coronet—eh?" said Fred. And the two gentlemen laughed a good deal at this manifestation of humour.

"Anything to look at?" continued Mr. Grossmith. "Pretty girl?"

"Oh, rather!" said Mr. Winn. "Deuced nice-looking, *I* call her."

"Others too; don't doubt," said Fred, philosophically. "Scores probably. Only met her lately, didn't you?"

"Last week at dinner at Lady Rumford's. I've met her once since at lunch. A fellow I met there told me all about her. He said she was some connection of Lady Rumford—cousin, you know, or something of that kind,—and was going to stay with her all the season."

"She'll be hooked, then, before it's over," said Fred, with a positive air. "*You've* no chance, Winn. Bet a sovereign, you have not.

"Done with you, old man,' said the heiress-hunter, placing his thin and badly-shaped hand in the cushioned palm of Mr. Grossmith. "Hum! No chance, do you say! By Jove!" And he got up and surveyed himself for some moments in the greasy mirror over the mantle-piece, arranging his neck-tie several times, and passing his hand through his emaciated hair. Fred watched

him with an amused twinkle in his little eyes, and aimed immense volumes of tobacco smoke at the back of his coat.

"Where are you going after seeing the fascinating Mildred?" he inquired presently. "Stay dinner?"

"Dear, no," said Grantley. "That's to say, of course, I would if I was asked; but I don't believe there's much chance of it. Her ladyship of Rumford and yours obediently are not on such familiar terms yet, don't you know. I was thinking, old fellow, I could meet you somewhere, and we could dine at this new restaurant of yours. Say seven o'clock. I owe you a dinner, you know."

"Do you?" said Fred. "B'lieve your right. 'Pavilion' or somewhere else afterwards?"

Grantley nodded assent, and then asked, "What shall we do now, old man? Shall we go to Snaggs's and play billiards till it's time for me to tool off to Berkeley Square?"

"I'm your man," said Fred, slowly raising his substantial figure from its chair. "Stop a-bit," he said, pausing as they were leaving the room. "I've got it!"

"Got what?" said Grantley.

"The dodge for raising the wind."

"Have you, old porpoise?" cried Grantley. "I'm enchanted. Out with it."

"This is it," said Fred. "I've got some four hundred pounds or thereabouts reverting to me at the death of a venerable aunt. I'm told there's a fellow called Luchars, who hangs out close by in Craig's Court, who lends coin on reversions and things of that kind, or buys 'em, if you like. Devilish odd I didn't think of it before. Well, I vote we slope round to the beggar, and if he's reasonable, either—what d'ye call it?—mortgage or sell. If we manage to get a hundred or so, of course you shall share the plunder. Come on, my boy! Look sharp!"

"Right you are, old cock! D——d happy thought of yours, by Jove!" cried Mr. Winn, rushing downstairs, and nearly laying the maid-of-all work on her back, as she was bearing a tray of empty dishes from the down-stairs lodger's parlour.

ALICE!

A YELLOW leaf
From the forest gloom
Was borne by a moaning breath;
With eyes of grief,
From an infant's tomb,
We watched the portent of Death;
And we saw, oh woe! its bespoken place,
On the fairest breast of our Royal race.

The sun's first beam
From the eastern gate,
Its radiance was spreading bright;
A lovely gleam,
Which no ills amate,
We traced on her face so white;
As the Princess slept we divined her joy,
In the sun she saw, oh! her bonny boy!

"Oh, Father come,
For the sea is calm,
I stand by the shore's wild dells;
I am not dumb,
I have sung thy psalm,
And gathered there purple shells;
So send me the boats, I will cross the bay,
And live evermore in the isle of Day."

A fragrant dew
On her forehead stood,
And a lovelight in her eyes;
We bade adieu,
For the circling blood
In her veins was loath to rise;
We wept, and she sobbed like a wandered child,
Till face to her face all her loved ones smiled.

Her Father's call,
And her infant's hymn,
Have guided her up to rest;
In the banquet hall,
When the lamps are trim,
Shall she, with her charms, be blessed;
No more on the earth shall her longing gaze
Look up for the light of the golden days.

ALFRED HENRY BROMILOW.

SAINT VALENTINE'S EVE.

A VOICE sang soft in a dream last night,
And it called me—called me!
Whose was the call?—for my heart, once light,
Boundeth no longer.
O dreams, paint stronger
A hope that mine eyes are fain to see—
If an eternity blooms for me
Anear the voice that thralled me.

O still, the thrill of the voice vibrates
As it called me—called me:
Tender, oh tender, as one that waits,
A blessing bearing
For one life's wearing.
Is mine the life? Oh, my heart as stone
Sinketh adown; but the sound is blown
Near, of the voice that thralled me.

What mother or sister's voice as sweet
Could so thrall me—thrall me?
Another tone doth their sweetness meet;
A weird note blending
That knows no ending.
Echoes repeat it, again, again!
My heart grows lighter; O love, remain!
I feel that thou dost call me!

E. T.

BRIEF AND VARIOUS.

OPENI NGOF A NORTH-EASTERN PASSAGE IN THE ARCTIC OCEAN.

THE letter of "Nordenskiold," to Mr. Oscar Dickson, published in the *Standard*, of December 26, 1878, conveying intelligence of his having doubled Cape Tscheljuskin, or North-east Cape, and of the Swedish Arctic Expedition being fairly on its way to Behring's Straits, has gladdened the hearts of all geographers.

We gave full details of the equipment and objects of the Expedition, at the time of its starting from Gothenburg, in THE NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE. It is, therefore, with all the greater pleasure that we have to note its full success in achieving the greatest of all the objects proposed,—that of establishing the possibility of a navigation from Europe eastwards by Siberia to Japan and China.

Starting from Sweden in the early part of July last, the gallant leader of the Expedition—Nordenskiold—worked his way past the great Samoyede peninsula, past the Obi, the Jenissei, till he doubled Cape Taimyr, the shores of whose bay were visited in sledges by Middendorf, in 1843, and finally doubling Cape Tscheljuskin, neither of which feats has before been accomplished by sea-going vessels, he reached the mouth of the Lena by the 27th of August last, and has thence, from Yakutsk, higher up the river, and whither the *Lena* was despatched, sent back the first glad news of his success. As it is almost plain sailing from the mouth of the Lena to Behring's Straits, not only has the feasibility of the passage from west to east through the Arctic Ocean, been shown in one summer; but the gallant crews of the *Vega*, and of her companion and sharer in the honour of the Expedition, the *Lena*, ought by this time to be safely riding in the China Sea—if the latter does not winter at Yakutsh.

The Expedition left Dickson Harbour, which is expected in the future to become an important haven in the Arctic regions, on the 10th of August, making for the most westerly of the Kamenni Islands. There was no ice, but the fog was so dense that they had to anchor off one of the numerous small islands which go to constitute the Samoyede Archipelago. On the 11th, bay ice, very thin and shattered, was met with, and the fog continued so persistently, that they had to resort to fog-horns for ascertaining each others' whereabouts in an unknown way, where islands were numerous, and submarine reefs probably not excluded. At times

when the fog became too dense, they had to fasten on some large ice-flake, or lay-to along side some of the isles, which occur in continuous groups along the coast from Dickson Harbour to Cape Tscheljuskin. "That," Professor Nordenskiold adds, "we did not during this stage of our cruise go aground even a single time, may be cited as a proof of the efficient manner in which the duty of the navigation of the vessel was discharged by Lieutenant Palander, and the assistant officers—Lieutenants Brusewitz and Hovgaard—working under his experienced guidance.

Never, it has been justly remarked by a well-known pen, was praise more generous or better deserved, although Lieutenant Palander, who commanded the Swedish Expedition, of 1873, needed no tribute from his old comrade in Arctic perils.

Whilst thus detained by fog, profitable dredging were carried carried on. Some large specimens of the extraordinary crinoide, *Alecto eschrichtii*, several kinds of star-fish, as also some large sorts of sea algæ were obtained. "On the other hand, the higher animal and vegetable life on land still continued very poor, so that, in comparison with the rocky shores of Spitzbergen and the western parts of Nova Zembla, this coast may be termed a perfect desert. Auks, razorbills, puffins, guillemots, and terns, which meet you in thousands upon thousands at Spitzbergen, do not occur here at all. Gulls and skuas (*lestris*), which there enliven the air with their incessant piping and noisy shrieks in fighting for their food, are here only very sparingly represented, each by two species, and it seems as if they were here less disposed to quarrel with each other. The only birds which are met with in anything like numbers are snow buntings, six or seven kinds of waders, and a few species of geese. Add to this one species of ptarmigan, the snowy owl (*Strix nyctea*), and one sort of falcon, and the bird-fauna of these parts of the Frigid Zone is enumerated, as far, at least, as we have had the opportunity to investigate it. Of hot-blooded animals in the adjacent sea we only met with two walrus, some bearded seals (*Phoca barbata*), and a herd of the rough seal (*Phoca hispida*). Fish is probably very abundant here."

From the 14th to the 18th of August, they were, while awaiting clear weather, riding at anchor in an excellent harbour-like roadstead, situated between the Taimyr Island and the Continent. The name of Actinia Harbour was given to it, from the great number of these mollusks that were found there.

"The country round was devoid of snow, and adorned with a grey-greenish vegetable covering, consisting of a closely-set mixture of grasses, mosses, and lavæ. The number of species of phanerogams was extremely small; the vegetation of mosses—and particularly that of lavæ—was, instead, sufficiently plentiful. The

whole formed, apparently, a much better grazing field for reindeer than what is to be found in the valleys of Belsound, Ice-fjord, or Stor-fjord, in Spitzbergen, where these animals abound. Though these regions are sure not to have been visited by any Russian whalers for the last century, still we met with but few reindeer, and these, to our regret, were so timorous as to frustrate the energies of our shots. Captain Johannesen attributed this circumstance, and it appears with reason, to the fact of the presence of wolves in the neighbourhood. He related having observed traces of wolves and a recently killed reindeer."

The *Vega* and the *Lena* weighed anchor again on the 18th, to continue the journey towards Cape Tscheljuskin, in spite of the still prevailing mist. "Our later experience," Nordenskiold adds, "of the weather of these parts of the world, has proved that we did right in advancing; had we waited for clear weather, we should probably have had to remain there until the sea had again put on its ice-cover."

They steamed at first along the western shore of the Taimyr Island, meeting only a little bay-ice, and Taimyr Bay, itself, was nearly free from ice; in passing they experienced a slight sea.

On the 19th of August they continued their course along the coast of the Tscheljuskin peninsula. The fog still kept very thick, at times only clearing up enough to enable them to discern the contour of the coast. The same day, however, at six o'clock in the evening, they dropped anchor in a small bay at the head of the promontory. Flags were flying, and salutes thundered from the *Vega*. They had gained one object of their journey's aim—the reaching of the most northern point of the old world. The terrible North-east Cape, never before passed by sea-going vessel, had at length been doubled.

The air had cleared, and the sun shone brightly on the promontory which was unencumbered by snow. A solitary polar bear was alone watching the new arrivals. The Cape is formed of slate, with mighty beds of quartz. Above is a clayish mould, as is often the case, broken up into more or less regularly-shaped sexangular prisms. There were grasses, mosses, and lava, and about twenty-four flowering plants—most of them distinguished by a remarkable tendency for forming into close semicircular tufts.

"It looked just as if the vegetable life of the Tscheljuskin peninsula had attempted an advance towards the north, and on encountering the sea had pitched at this extreme point of the land boundaries. Here were concentrated, in a small space, representatives of almost every one of the species of the vegetable kingdom that this region contained, many of which species you might have looked for in vain further down in the plains.

"The animal life on land vied with the higher vegetable life in poverty. Of birds there were only visible some quantity of snipes, a few species of the tringa family, a northern diver, a rather numerous flock of Brent geese (*Anser bernicta*), and some few eider-ducks; we also noticed some remains from a snowy owl. In the sea around, which was now free from ice, with the exception of a few pieces floating about here and there, we observed a solitary walrus, two shoals of the Arctic dolphin (*Delphinopterus leucas*), and a small number of the bristled seal (*Phoca hispida*); consequently also here was a conspicuous scarcity of hot-blooded animals. The dredge, on the contrary, brought us from the bottom of the sea several large algæ (as *Laminaria agardhi*, &c.), and a heap of the lower classes of marine animals. Among these latter were some very large specimens of *idothea entomon*, a sort of isopod that occurs also in the Baltic and some of our (Swedish) larger lakes—a circumstance which is considered as a proof of the existence of a connection between these last-named waters and the Arctic Ocean during the time of the ice season. This collection of algæ was, moreover, of interest in so far as it afforded further evidence against the erroneous opinion which has prevailed so long—namely, that the Siberian part of the Frozen Ocean is totally destitute of algæ of the higher order."

From the 21st to the 26th of August the time was spent in navigating between Cape Tscheljuskin and Olonek at the mouth of the Lena. A good deal of ice was met with, and the difficulties of navigation were increased by a dense mist. At the Oriental Taimyr Peninsula the air brightened, and a north-westerly breeze carried the vessels along, without the assistance of steam, over a perfectly smooth expanse. Mountains, at least 2000 to 3000 feet high, were visible some distance inland. The animal kingdom became also more numerously represented.

It now often became impossible to discern even a trace of ice from the vessel. "Like," says Nordenskiold, "we had previously encountered land far out where the maps denote sea, we were now sailing across regions marked on the maps as *terra firma*." At 11 a.m., on the 24th, they descried the island of Preobraschenski, where they landed to find only bears and innumerable gulls. The nights were now getting dark, and navigation had to be carried on with great care; but as they had magnificent weather, and a sea perfectly clear of ice, the ships arrived in safety at the mouth of the Lena on the 27th of August. "My intention," Nordenskiold says, "was originally to have cast anchor at the mouth of the Lena. But a favourable wind and a sea free from ice are here offering so magnificent an opportunity to continue the voyage that I do not feel myself justified to neglect it. We are, therefore,

now, in the night between the 27th and 28th, separating from the steamer Lena, with the view of sailing from here direct to the Fadejew Island, where I intend stopping for a few days. We shall from there go on direct to the Behring Strait and Japan. Our prospects of success are as genial as possible. All well on board. The vessel is in splendid condition, and our coal supply sufficient."

The results of this daring, skilfully performed, and most successful voyage, are of a very interesting, if not remarkable character.

"To judge from our experience during these last days," Nordenskiold writes from the mouth of the Lena, "the northern coast of Siberia does not, at the latter end of the summer season, appear to be any more troubled with ice than is, *e.g.*, the White Sea in the height of summer. The cause of this, as I have already pointed out in the programme of the expedition, is to be looked for in the masses of warm water which the large Siberian rivers let flow into the sea during the summer. The hydrographical investigations made in the course of the voyage will be found to throw further light upon these circumstances."

There can be no doubt, then, that henceforth the Siberian Ocean will be opened to navigation to a certain extent; but considering the difficulties of that navigation, the uncertainty with regard to the presence or absence of ice, the prevalence in summer, in so damp a climate, of dense fogs and impenetrable mists; and, above all, the very brief period at which the sea is open, vessels being always exposed to the chance of getting entangled in an ice labyrinth, as occurred in the Austro-Hungarian Expedition six years ago, or still more fatally detained in some ice-bound coast during a winter of eight to ten months, that navigation will scarcely ever be a thing to be depended upon.

"Years have passed since Peter the Great foresaw that if only the Siberian Sea were navigable an enormous traffic would grow up on its shores. Corn and timber from the Altai mountains, and rich ore and valuable furs could, he dreamed, be floated riverward to depôts on the coast, and so brought by sea to Archangel. True, the terrible, barely habitable region of dreary cruel swamp called the Tundra—the Sunderbunds of this vast northern continent—has to be passed, where four months in the year the ground is frozen as hard as iron for a yard below its surface. But in the summer the rivers are open, and the huge masses of drift wood which they wash down are carried out into the Polar Sea and floated far away to Novaya Zemyla and Spitzbergen."

But with the lapse of these years, new ideas of commercial intercommunication have sprung up, especially with the introduction of railways. An iron road prolonged from the Ural to Yakutsk and Ochotzk, tapping all the great rivers of Siberia at a point

where they are for the longest period of the year navigable to boats and rafts, would, it is to be opined, do more to open a highway for the corn, timber, rich furs, and valuable ores of the country above the Tundra and its mammoth relics, than sea communication with Archangel. It is, then, only to a modified extent that we can join in the enthusiastic statement:—

"Thus has at last been opened up for the vast natural wealth of Siberia an outlet of which the Archangel merchants will not be slow to avail themselves. Screw steamers can make their way in safety where sailing vessels dare not venture. With the aid of steam Nature has been once again defied and conquered. A powerful and numerous fleet will soon carry each summer to Archangel the rich products of Northern Asia, and a fresh page will be opened in the history of the great Russian Empire."*

NEW CRYSTALS FROM THE ARCTIC OCEAN.

A VERY interesting fact presented itself to the Arctic explorers in the course of the north-east passage. It is so remarkable that we must give it in the words of Professor Nordenskiold himself. "Before going further," he writes, "I feel bound to relate the finding of a very curious object. Whilst the vessel was lying secured along one of the few iceblocks that we came across of sufficient size and strength to carry half a score of men, I and Lieut. Nordqvist stepped down on the ice in order to ascertain whether we might not also here find some of that remarkable stuff of cosmical origin which I discovered in 1872 on the ice off the north coast of Spitzbergen. However, I could not find here anything similar. But Lieutenant Nordqvist drew my attention, instead, to some yellow spots on the snow, which I, thinking they originated from slime of some diatomaceæ, asked him to collect and give for examination to any of the botanists of the expedition. At this subsequent examination it was found to be not an organic matter, but a kind of thick-grained gravel, in finely-shaped crystals of up to even a few millimetres in diameter. I have not myself had time and opportunity of scrutinising it more closely, but, as an experienced mineralogist, I am able to see that there is in this case not a question of any ordinary terrestrial mineral, though it may possibly prove some kind of matter that the strong winter cold has crystallised out from the sea water."

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* We regret much to have to add, since the above was written, intelligence has reached the country of the *Vega* having been frozen in on the way to Behring's Straits, and an expedition is to be forthwith sent out to the succour.

There is much matter for reflection in this discovery. "A kind of thick-grained gravel" would suggest the idea of silex, mixed with some other substance, probably alumina or a feroxide; but being "in finely-shaped crystals," would rather favour the idea of pure silex. There is nothing to surprise us in such a discovery, as it is well known that sponges and certain alcyoniæ occasionally contain silex, and that wonderful structure of polypi, the *Euplectella aspergillum*, or Venus's flower-basket, is purely siliceous; and yet the silex has been appropriated by living organisms, from out of the sea, in order to construct the beautiful dwelling of the particular set or group of organisms; just as the polypi of corals appropriate the lime of the sea to construct analogous dwellings, in various forms and shapes. But Nordenskiold adds, "as an experienced mineralogist, I am able to see that there is in this case not a question of an ordinary terrestial mineral, though it may possibly prove some kind of matter that the strong winter cold has crystallised out from the sea water." This would suggest the discovery of a new element in the Arctic Ocean; a thing so very unlikely, that we must wait for more satisfactory chemical investigation before it can be admitted.

THE GRAND-DUKE NICOLAS CONSTANTINE ON ASIATIC RAILWAYS.

No reasonable person would grudge the Russians railway communication in Central Asia. They would constitute the compliment of their conquests, and are as necessary to commerce, and to the development of the country, as they are in Southern Asia to the protection and prosperity of more favoured, yet long neglected, lands. But Russia does not appear to be satisfied with the tenure of Northern and Central Asia, it is ever pressing upon the South. In Europe the provinces beyond the Danube will never cease to be looked upon as stepping-stones to Constantinople. Ever since the annexation of the Trans-Caucasian Provinces, Russia has been advancing in Armenia and Persia (according to the latest reports, even to annexing Teheran by means of a so-called international railway between Resht on the Caspian Sea and Teheran), and she openly covets power in Afghanistan on the very frontier of our possessions in India. Yet, if ever Nature has marked out geographical and national limits between powers, is Russia in Asia distinctly separated from India, Afghanistan, Persia, and Trans-Caucasia, by the significant barrier of distinction of races and of vast mountain ranges.

The contribution made by the Grand Duke Nicolas to the literature of Asiatic railways happily does not extend to debatable regions. It concerns itself with an interesting and legitimate

inquiry as to the best and most feasible road from Moscow to Tash-Kand, and with a comparison between the existing lines from Moscow to Nijni Novgorod and to Orenburg, those decreed to be prolonged to Jekatherinsburg; those projected by the Government engineers from Orenburg to Tash-Kand, and from Jekatherinsburg to the same place, and both on the sources of the Teke or Taka, and a more direct line, personally explored and projected by the Grand Duke himself, from Orenburg to Tash-Kand.

The question would, beyond the common interest felt in the progress of civilisation, have little importance in the eyes of our readers, were it not also accompanied by some curious and peculiar details in physical geography. The reason, indeed, why the more devious route from Orenburg to Tash-Kand, by the sources of the Teke river, had been selected by the Government engineers, was that the more direct line would have to be carried across the sands of the Desert of Kara Kûm. The main object of the Grand Duke's inquiries were, therefore, directed to the question as to whether or not these sands presented insuperable difficulties to the construction of a railway from Orenburg to Tash-Kand. The conception hitherto entertained of the physical character of this great desert were of an almost theoretical nature. It was generally supposed to be a mere expanse of mobile sands, and this idea was derived from the difficulties experienced by the Russian troops under General Obroutcheff, and Count Perovsky, on the western borders of the desert, and on the shores of the Sea of Aral, as also from the impressions of travellers, such as Mouravieff, Burnes, Vambéry, and others, and which themselves were derived from what they had seen of other sandy deserts in Central Asia, as more especially in the Khala-Aba (Khalati Choli of Vambéry's map), on the right bank of the Amu Daria, or Oxus, between Khiva and Bokhara.

But, according to the Grand Duke, the desert of the Kara-Kûm, or of the "Black Sands," differs greatly in its character, not only from other sandy deserts in Central Asia, but from its own westerly extension, generally known as that of the Kizil-Kûm, or of the "Red Sands." Its surface constitutes part of the great depression which Humboldt looked upon as the bottom of an inland sea, dried up in parts, and which he designated as the Aralo-Caspian depression. The fundamental soil is a saliferous or saline clay. What sands there are, are in the north-east portion of the desert, disseminated over broken eminences of no great extent, and they become altogether rare in the south-east, where they only occur in small patches. But to the west the surface is completely invaded by irregular masses of sand, out of which the clayey subsoil

only emerges in places. These sands are formed into downs or ridges by intervening depressions, called by the Khirgiz "Kongre-liuks." They have generally a north-east to south-west direction. The subsoil itself has manifestly been deposited in brackish water, but this has, with prolonged atmospheric action, been covered with sandy ridges. In places, however, as at Kalmaz, beds of clay, mingled with quartz, are met with; at Monz Bil with a shelly conglomerate; and at Buir Tamar with argillaceous and calcareous beds. One fragment only of the desert, near Maili Bach and the Sir Daria or Jaxartes, is, by its composition and the character o its subsoil, referred to an older geological epoch.

The geologist, Eversmann, traced the origin of these beds of shells to the atmospheric pulverisation of the marles and oolites which lie beneath the clay; but another geologist, Meyer, showed that the shells, such as cardium and mytilus, met with in the sands of the Kara-Kûm, are also met with, with their live mollusks, in the Sea of Aral, and that they testify to the marine origin of these sands. The remains of sea-weeds and reeds, found by Lehmann in perfect preservation beneath the sandy ridges of the Kara-Kûm, not only substantiate Meyer's views as to the origin of these sands, but they further show that they do not belong to a very remote date, and this is further proved by the fact that in the south-westerly portion of the Kara-Kûm, this "ensablement," or aggregation of sandy particles, is still going on. On the north-eastern shore of the Aral, the sea is gradually withdrawing itself, leaving behind it sands, which, under the same atmospheric influences as have contributed to the formation of the Kara-Kûm, assume the character of undulating ridges, common to the whole expanse of this vast solitude.

The sands of recent formation, compared with others that date from more remote epochs, present the appearance of a true desert, being utterly bare of vegetation, and hence they present no resistance to the winds. The Kirghiz designate these mobile sands, as Balpak-Kûm, to distinguish them from the consolidated sands, which they call Kongre-Kûm. The passage of one to another is gradual, the sands becoming more and more covered with vegetation the greater the distance from the Sea of Aral, and hence that part of the Kara-Kûm now under consideration is to be looked on as a solid soil, and not as moving sand. The sand itself, it has been found by examination, contains, besides silica, alumina, chlorure of sodium (sea salt), and other salts, and it is declared by the Grand Duke to be favourable to the development of vegetation.

This vegetation is, however, poor and sparse. It consists of a few shrubs, and of such plants as grow in saline marshes. Where the soil is moist, and at times covered with efflorescence, it is called

Sor by the Khirgiz; where sandy but stable, Kûmak. These Sors are very treacherous. They are at times covered with a thin, dry crust; yet, if man or horse ventures upon them, the crust breaks, and the victim is engulfed in the mud and perishes. The Sor of Sarke is so fatal, that it is known to the Kirghiz as "the deadly salt marsh." On the other hand, various sized hollows—the bottoms of dried-up lakes—are met with, the dry and hard clayey beds of which are perfectly safe. They have their origin on the melting snows, which, however, soon evaporate. In time of rain these takuirs, as they are called, become very slippery.

The portion of the wilderness which extends between Orenburg and Tash-Kand is divided into two chief sandy regions, apart from one another. That to the north, with its little detached islets of sand, is more particularly known as the Kara-Kûm, or "black sands," that to the south is known as the Jingchka-Kûm, or "narrow sands." The word "Kara" is used in a great variety of significations in the lands where Turkish is spoken. It is generally used in a figurative sense for dark, forbidding, difficult, or dangerous, or of evil augury. The number of Kara-Taghs (or Tags in Central Asia), "black mountains," Kara-Sus and Kara-Chaïs, "black waters and rivers," and Kara Guls (Kul's in Central Asia), "black lakes," are beyond enumeration. In some cases the signification is obvious, as in pine-clad mountains or really dark waters; in others it is figurative. Ancient and modern ruins have also "Kara" attached to some other name. Kara Hissars, Kalahs, and Kilissas, or black castles, and churches, are likewise innumerable.

In the present instance, the Grand Duke Nicholas assures us on the authority of the Kirghiz Sultan, Jantiurin, that the Kara-Kûm are so called from the dark colour of the vegetation. The polite Asiatic did not probably like to say that it was so called from its dangers, its solitude, and its evil repute.

Sand hills are met with, not only in ridges and groups, but also as isolated cones, which according to the Kirghiz, who call them "Urmas," are permanent. The Russians call them Barkans. The Kirghiz say they have their origin in the vegetation having been destroyed by men or animals; in fact, they appear to be, from shrubs bared by horses, which sink in them up to the knees, sands that have been blown up into a mound, around a decaying nucleus of vegetation. Living shrubs are also met with between Urmas, with their roots bare and exposed.

The sand ridges vary in elevation from six or eight yards to over twenty. When they attain the latter height they are known to the Kirghiz as Ur-guls. It is in the depressions between the ridges that sors, or dried-up lakes, and the dangerous takuirs are also met with.

Water is to be found almost everywhere in these sandy regions, at the depth of from one to three yards. What is more is that it is potable—a point in which the Kara-Kûm presents an important difference from most other sandy wildernesses in Central Asia. Innumerable cisterns, called "Kuduks," have been sunk by the Kirghiz, and as, if exhausted, they fill rapidly again, water is never wanting. The water in these cisterns is, however, at times corrupted by vegetable, or even animal, remains; and they require cleansing occasionally. Two or three are often sunk near one another. But in the solid clay of the plain, on which the sands rest, water is not to be obtained save at a depth of from four to eight yards or more, and then it is brackish. Hence the Kirghiz rarely sink cisterns in the solid plain, the less so, as they can almost everywhere get to the slopes of sandy ridges, where they can get good water at a little depth. Salt springs are sometimes met with as at Ak Kainar-Kûm, giving origin to streamlets, which are, however, soon lost in the sands. A spring of potable water is met with at Kainar Bulak. The Kirghiz utilise its water for the growth of melons and arbus, or water-melons. The Grand Duke Nicholas explains the existence of a greater amount of salt in the clays and depressions of the soil, by the former not having been subjected to rain or atmospheric action, while the sands have, and hence their soluble salts have filtrated into the depressions.

The plants of the Kara-Kûm have roots of a length out of all proportion to their growth above the soil. In old times the Khirgiz seldom ventured with their herds into the southern part of the wilderness, which was exposed to razzias, and at that time vegetation was loftier and denser. The *Calligonum caput medusæ*, one of the most common shrubs, covered at that epoch whole tracts, and attained a height of from three to six feet. The Kirghiz now frequent the Kara-Kûm in large numbers, and they winter there, as they are sheltered by the sand hills from snow-storms. What little vegetation there is, is thus rapidly destroyed.

Yet nothing is more certain than that vegetation constitutes the chief means of consolidating the sands. In 1869 the country around the town of Irghis was an utter desert, the vegetation having been destroyed by the garrison; and even houses were buried in the sands; but in 1871 strict orders were issued to protect vegetable growth, and even in a year's time it had so far regained its ascendancy that the sands were no longer mobile. The Kirghiz themselves aver that where vegetation has been destroyed, it suffices to leave the soil undisturbed for two or three years to enable it to recover itself.

The Grand Duke Nicholas brings forward several instances of winter habitations of the Kirghiz at the foot of sand downs, of the

kibitkas, or summer tent habitations, of the same nomadic races, of tombs on barkhans, or sand mounds, of pathways, camel tracts and roads, and of bones of animals lying uncovered for years, to show that the Kara-Kûm is in no way liable to an invasion of sand, but is, on the contrary, a permanent and stable solitude.

This solitude can also, it appears, be traversed in safety at all times of the year. The climate is the same as that of the other Kirghiz steppes. Spring comes on rapidly at the end of March, and is succeeded by summer heats by the end of May. At this epoch the plains are enlivened by many flowering plants. As the heat progresses most of these are dried up, but others, as *Calligonum caput medusæ*, come into flower. The *Alhagi camelorum*, with its bright red flowers, and other saline or crassulated plants, are vividly green at the same epoch. In autumn the wilderness assumes an uniformly grey tint. The nights, as in early spring, are very cold, whilst the days are still hot. Hoar frosts come on in September, and the days themselves become cold in October, with cutting winds. Snow begins to fall, and storms, at times approximating to hurricanes, sweep over the surface of the vast wilderness.

Finally, according to the Grand Duke, the proved immutability of the Kara-Kûm, the facilities presented by a solid surface to transport, and the presence of potable water, in every way adapt the wilderness for a line of railway across Central Asia, which will be more direct than any hitherto proposed by Russian engineers.

Whether the Grand Duke's scheme, or that of the engineers, be carried out or not, the reader will not fail to be struck with the spirit of enterprise shown by Russia in advancing to the south of Asia by iron roads; while Great Britain, with the same means but a less enterprising policy, does not take a step towards opening Southern Asia beyond the Indus, including Persia, Asia Minor, Syria, or Mesopotamia, to commerce and intercommunication—to power and prosperity.